

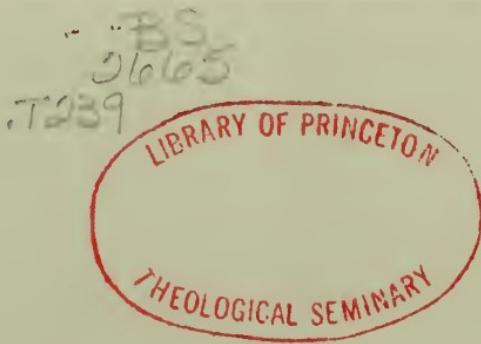
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No. 5.

TEMPLE COURT SCRIPTURE READINGS.

NOTES OF READINGS

IN

ROMANS.

BY

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ROMANS.

CHAPTER I.

Paul a slave, a bond-servant of Jesus Christ. This has a very sweet meaning—it is simply this, that he had no will of his own. A slave has no right to a will. He belongs to his master, and his only business is to do the will of his master. And so we have in 1 Cor. ix., “Woe is me if I preach not the gospel.” As a bond-servant he had to do it.

Then, “by calling, an apostle.” That is, that he was called by Christ and sent out, for apostle means “sent out.” He was separated unto the good news from God concerning His Son Jesus Christ.

Now this is what we have learned; whenever we think of Paul we are to think of the fact that he of all the apostles was separated unto that. It is not so much what He was before the foundation of the world as what He was as the seed of David down here and in resurrection, thus declared or determined by God as the Son of God. He is not ashamed to call us sons, or Christ as a man, Son. He takes special delight in calling everyone son that can come up to His mind. Christ having met the whole matter of guilt and sin righteously and in the spirit of holiness, He therefore gets the title of “Son of God” as a *man*. He was always the Son, as God, in relation with the Father and the Holy Spirit. But here

it is the title as having accomplished all God's will on the cross, meeting the whole matter of sin and guilt, presenting His own breast to exhaust its penalty for those who believe on Him.

The "spirit of holiness" was this thorough acknowledgment of the insult to God, resenting it in behalf of God, and paying the righteous demand of death to the full. For this God raises Him up and proclaims Him "Son of God," an additional glory, a well-earned title.

But there is another thought, "Son of God with power." That involves you and me; power to take us up and make us sons of God. Why? Because we are believers on the Lord Jesus Christ.

"These things we write unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God, that ye may know you have eternal life." And then, "Beloved, now are we sons of God." That is what you get in the gospel of John, where Christ is set forth as the Son of God. Also, "As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become sons of God." It does not say good Jews or Gentiles, but sons of God. First, He is declared to be the Son of God Himself, and then the "power" is to bring others in. In Hebrews ii. we are told it became Him by whom are all things and for whom are all things, in bringing many sons to the glory to make the Leader of their salvation perfect through suffering.

Now you see how we are linked with Him. In 1 John we learned that we have the same life as He had, and that we are sons of God, and in Hebrews, that He is bringing many sons to the glory, and that He who sanctifies and those who are sanctified are all of one. This is the more striking from the fact that Israel were never called sons. It is a rank outranking anything God had ever disclosed.

The Word never gives us anything higher than this.

In Hebrews, therefore, we get Him as a Leader. Thus we are spoken of ourselves as a kind of first-fruits, and hence the great central thought is Jesus as the *Son of God*. I am the more anxious that you get this truth thoroughly from the fact that people sometimes think of it simply as divine, as they speak of the Trinity ; but you must get the title as His as a man, as the reward of the work that He did. Study where you will in all the Epistles of Paul and in all his teachings in the Acts, you will never find him falling below the character of Christ as the Son of God ; whereas the twelve disciples did not teach this at all. You will find that the highest rank they give Christ is that of Servant. When they pray they say, “In the name of thy holy servant Jesus.” (Acts iv. 30.) It was Christ down here serving God when Israel failed to serve Him, and then He comes in to take the place of the unfaithful servant, and His reward is “I will give you the Kingdom.”

There must needs be a new place for a new class of people ; the sons of God belong in heaven, the children of Israel on this earth. In Col. iii. 2, He says, “You have risen out of this place and your life is hid with Christ in God.” And what next? “When Christ our life shall appear, then shall we also appear with Him in the glory.” I speak of this that you may see the meaning of the word—“He was declared to be the Son of God *with power*.” The power has taken us in. When He said “All power is given to Me in heaven and in earth,” the heaven meant us, and the earth the Jews. From that same One that has done all this, Paul received grace and apostleship.

What intense delight we can have in this fact !

Everything so solidly settled; such a wonderful character of truth; and then commissioning an apostle purposely for that, giving him that as his whole work, and attaching him so thoroughly to it that he is a slave to it, bound to it, that it is woe to him if he does not preach it—that gospel, not simply any gospel he shall choose.

The idea is that everything shown out in its utmost deformity and guilt and ruin in Christ's grace meets it all in a holy way, a righteous way, and God is honored, and we are brought into His presence. See how different the law is from the grace, the one keeping us out, the other bringing us in nigh to God! There is such a mixing up of these things in what is commonly called the gospel. The Holy Spirit comes forth to give out a gospel that is unique in its character, different from all that has gone before, a perfectly distinct gospel that begets sons of God, and the apostleship is given to Paul to tell that thing. Relationship of the Old Testament time was earthly, now it is heavenly. The Saints of the Old Testament and millennial time on the earth will be under Christ, not in Him.

"To all that be in Rome, beloved of God." Before he tells you anything else he tells you that. People have turned the gospel upside down and tell us we must love God. The grand proclamation to-day is "God loves." It is "beloved of God." The moment you are saved you are "beloved of God." What a sweet word that is!

Ver. 7. People sometimes say "I am afraid I don't love Him enough." It doesn't make a particle of difference. The Word says you are beloved of God. That is your first blessing. The next is "called saints." He has taken you out of all that you were in and set you apart to Himself. Let Him

bring out the fruits. Let Him do with you according to Himself. Some say, "How am I to do this and that?" I answer, "Don't do it. Just be delighted in what He has done." Will you ever get hold of the fact that His love is the great thing? To drink this in more and more is the whole of living.

If you were to go to one of these medicinal springs to get your rheumatism cured, you would just drink the water and let it do all the work. Now you just drink the water, that is all I say to every believer in Christ. Keep drinking the water. No need to keep saying, "But mustn't I serve?" Service will take care of itself. A man is carried up to Saratoga Springs for instance, and he is to find in those springs perfect health. What would you think of him if he were to say, "But mustn't I walk? Mustn't I run or jump?" No doubt that will all come to him later, but it will come only through his taking the water.

Then as soon as he comes among you he announces, "grace to you, and peace;" God's favor and God's peace.

The whole of the first chapter is introductory; it not only opens up Roman's but all Paul's apostleship.

Ver. 8. "I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world." That is the Church of Rome. It is called by the same name to-day, but I do not hear of its faith so spoken of. O what a fall there has been since the day when he could say that he thanked God that their faith was spoken of throughout the world! You will learn as we go on that faith gets everything; everything that God has projected in regard to us and Christ, and everything that Christ has done with its multitude of results, all that God is carrying out now—we get it by simply

believing. That is the whole matter. Faith comes from a report. I am linked with all there is in heaven and in the past and future by just believing God's report of it. It is mine.

Christ is not now to do anything to save us, it is done. That is one of the grandest words you can think of—Done, not Do! And then what does it say? Simply to believe the things that are done, and it will keep you the rest of your time on earth, and afterwards forever, too.

Let us get this thought perfectly in our minds. If your child were to be everlastingly speaking of what he would do, and how much he would try to do to be your child, why how unhappy that would make you. And his being doubtful as to whether he was doing enough to be your child—you would be displeased. If I had a million servants not one of them could ever become my child by doing anything, no matter how hard he tried. I felt it to-day as I held up that smallest atom of humanity, my youngest grandchild, and thought how inexpressibly dear to me it was in its perfect helplessness and weakness. Yet what had it ever done for me, or for that matter for anybody? Yet ask that mother, or ask that Father up there what you have done, and it will not be the amount of scurrying around you have done, or that you have had an experience like this brother or that—I say it will not be any of these. Well, then, what have you done to Him? Just what that baby had done to his mother. He had made her glad in being hers; so you have made God glad in having you, and if you had been a bit better he would not have been half so glad. Will you accept that?

O this constant cry, "If I could only be better!" Then you mean by that that you already have something in stock, do you? Then you are not taking the

right ground—the ground that the whole claim that you have upon God is that you are a sinner. Now then, there is not a parent in this world that does not value the life and all the little actions of his child more than all the others in creation ; just as a man who is betrothed to a maiden, her smiles, her voice, her grace, her very step are of more account to him than those of all the other people in the world. Just so it is our Father feels toward us, His children. Just so Christ delights in His expected Bride, already betrothed to Him.

As we go on with Paul's truth we must realize and accept the utter nothingness of man that He starts with, that we may be for the expression of His glory and His grace all the time.

I had to say last night where I was, that I was afraid there was not a preacher in that town that knew how to preach the gospel, for they always put in "there is something to do." A famous preacher wrote a book on the subject, and because a stupid, blind, ignorant heathen said, "What must I do to be saved?" he took that as truth, and used it for his text and theme, saying that it was evident there is something for the sinner to do. And now I say to you just the opposite, simply because the Word of God says just the opposite—"that your faith is proclaimed," not your works. There in Rome was a little band of God's children standing out alone, and it was spoken of everywhere. It does not take a great many people to make a good deal of talk if they are acting right. A little company in Thessalonica acted so that the apostle said, I do not have to say to them what I have been preaching, for they repeat it to me themselves. Sometimes I feel happy to hear of things going out from this room, around to different places. It may be that God is going to

give us, too, a little occasion for thankfulness in this way that the gospel will go out from here. Perhaps if we pray a great deal more for all, we might hear more of it. It may be if we were all praying for the saints more earnestly there might be more done. Instead of finding fault with saints, let us try praying for them.

The apostle was not a particle higher than they were. There was nothing official nor ecclesiastical in it—nothing at all like the state of things nowadays, where one man is higher than another.

Ver. 11. The very way in which they received the truth and it grew up in them would be the very thing that would give more joy. As John said, “I have no greater joy than that my children walk in the truth.” It is not how many churches you have founded, nor how many experience meetings you have attended, but it is how you have walked in the truth.

What was this spiritual gift that he would impart? Why more and more of the word of God. “To the end that ye may be established.” Nothing but the word of God will establish. “Your faith grows exceedingly”—upon what but upon recitals and reports? Now the apostle would bring more report about Him in the glory to them, and they would take it in, and bring him their experience of what God had done for them, and he would take it in, and that is where they would mutually profit each other.

In Col. ii. we learn that he was exercised about all that had not seen his face. The assembly in Rome, as also in other places, was composed of believers from all parts of the world, and of course they had heard from various preachers; but Paul had the special truth of Christ risen, and therefore he needed to see them in order to impart that truth to them.

Ver. 14. His desire to come to Rome was to have

fruit among them as he had among the other Gentiles. The first statement, "I am a debtor both to the Greeks and also to the Barbarians," you will notice does not include the Jews. The Greek is the general word here for Gentile; the Barbarians were the outsiders from parts more distant, of course. Therefore, when he says, "I am a debtor both to the Greeks and also to the Barbarians," omitting altogether the Jew, he takes the two names to describe all the Gentiles.

I do not know that anyone can properly preach or teach who does not really apprehend that he is a debtor. The apostle was a gift to the body of Christ, therefore his business was to give out Christ—he was thereby made a debtor. The reason he gave out the truth was because it belonged to those to whom he preached it, and he had to pay that debt, both to the wise and to the foolish, and he was ready to preach the gospel to them that were in Rome also. He did not go, as we are aware, but turned aside and went to Jerusalem, when doubtless he ought to have gone on to Rome. He later on (in chap. xv.) gives a very feeble excuse for doing this. His business was to preach the gospel and he was a debtor to the Gentiles to preach it, and therefore it would have been the proper thing for him to have gone and paid his debt.

Ver. 15. "I am not ashamed of the gospel" comes in with meaning, in reference to his going to Rome to preach. Rome was the centre of the world and all there was of power and glory, and all that man would in any way boast in. But he was not ashamed of this gospel, the gospel that would prostrate everyone, write sentence of death on every man. It was the power of God. Now Rome was the personification of the power of man, and here

was the power of God coming into the midst of them.

"To everyone that believeth." This will be brought out very clearly in the Epistle as we go on; it is very sweet to meditate on, however. The simple news of what God has done for the lost sinner becomes when it is received the power of making into a new man completely. We have in John, "As many as received Him, to them gave He *power* to become sons of God." No power like this in the law or man's reasoning or culture. Here is power to make an entirely different man, and the kind of man is the new man like Christ. God Himself writes that what the law could not do the gospel could.

Then he states here, "To the Jew first, and also to the Greek." "For therein is the righteousness of God revealed." In the early verses it is the gospel of God concerning His Son Jesus Christ. Now it is spoken of as the gospel. It is the revelation of God's righteousness, and this whole book is full of it. It is revealed on a new principle completely, on the principle of faith and addressed to faith.

The righteousness of God is a complete thing before you get it. He is righteous in offering it to you and accomplishing it in Christ, and the moment you receive it you are made righteous before God. The whole question of righteousness then is the issue here before us, and it is settled also here.

There is no transfer of righteousness. There is no one from whom to transfer it. If the law is included in this thought, "Thou shalt love the Lord with all thy might and with all thy strength, etc.," there is not much overplus to transfer even from Christ.

God has not only loved us and saved us, but He has done it righteously. There will be no occasion for taking it to pieces afterwards, to see if it is all

right. If it were simply love, I might say, Will it last? But when I know it is righteousness I know I have a foundation that is eternal.

This principle of faith alone is given in the Old Testament (Hab. ii.), "The just shall live by faith," and we find the same principle all the way through. There has never been any other ground than that a man had to walk by faith. The only thing that pleased God was faith. Thus far is introductory.

Ver. 18. "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who hold the truth in unrighteousness." The foundation principle is this, then: There is man in sin, in guilt, before God. The wrath of God has been told all through the scriptures, as being against all that he does. We start at the very bottom of things. "The wrath of God revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness." It was ungodliness in the nature opposed to God; unrighteousness in conduct of those who knew the truth. They had truth and did not obey it. It did not matter whether it was one thing or twenty; whether it was simply a matter of God's creating the world, or anything else whatever; it was the man holding that truth in unrighteousness, not obeying it, that was guilt. The law was given to bring out guilt, for sin is not imputed where there is no law. The sinner is just as bad, of course; the law simply brings out the conduct and raises the question of guilt. This is what is meant by those who "hold the truth in unrighteousness."

There are two things then here, the ungodliness of the man, and the unrighteousness of the conduct. The result is the wrath of God upon him. I come out of the Old Testament with some such thought as that. The last word is a curse. "Lest He come and

smite the earth with a curse." It is judgment because of iniquity, sin, unrighteousness. This then is the great thing.

Then unrighteousness, ungodliness and all, to be met righteously! If it is not met righteously it is not worth anything. That is one of the grandest things about the whole matter of salvation; the righteousness of it!

Ver. 19, 20. Inasmuch as he said then that unrighteousness of man is in question, he shows what it is. "Because that which might be known of God is manifested in them," for God has told man these things that he might be without excuse. You see how that enters into the question of the salvation of everybody on the earth. There is no excuse for man's not worshipping God, because God has revealed Himself to all in some way. In the creation and the material things, His eternal power and divinity, the invisible things. He shows this in creating man and in holding the heavens up. What ought I to do then as a man but worship Him as the Creator? There is one book in scripture that brings that as the great thing (Ecclesiastes). "Remember now thy Creator;" everything there looks at Him simply as the Creator, because it is man down here seeing that after all everything else is vanity. What then? "Fear God," is the word to be found on all sides. The final gospel in the book of Rev. (xiv. 6, 7) comes to that. The last appeal to man will be to fear God and worship Him who made the heavens and the earth. In the scriptures you cannot find any place where there is not condemnation for any man who does not worship the Creator.

In Acts x. 34, 35, Peter speaks of it in the house of Cornelius—"I perceive that God is no respecter of persons, but in every nation he that feareth Him and

worketh righteousness is accepted with Him." Those two things Cornelius did, and he was accepted. He was on as good a ground as a Gentile, as a Jew then or a Christian now. But as God had more news for him He told him about Christ. "To him that hath shall be given." Acting upon what he had he got more.

Starting from the Ark, they knew God and worshipped Him, but went out from it and directly fell into idolatry and got away from God. All idolatry is apostasy ; it is not a rudimentary thing. And so all apostasy results in idolatry. What will be the most prominent thing in the end ? Idolatry in that which calls itself the Church !

Ver. 21. "Because that when they knew God they glorified Him not as God." If you put this then alongside of that in Acts x., you get the whole principle. There was a man who did to God just according to the truth he had as a Gentile, and then you have the condemnation of man universally. There can be no question of salvation whatever.

They not only turned away from Him, but turned to idolatry and worshipped ; professing themselves to be wise they became fools. You see, they would worship ; it was not because man could not worship. If there is anything that distinguishes man peculiarly it is that he is naturally a worshipping animal. He is more sensitive on this subject than on any other ; will fight more and quicker for this than for any other thing ; will be up in arms as quick for his God as for his home or his wife and children, and perhaps a little quicker. He is pre-eminently a worshipping animal. But he worships the wrong things. Then he is guilty. Then his ungodliness had brought itself out in conduct and it was unrighteousness, and so the wrath of God is revealed against him as unrighteous.

Ver. 24. "Wherefore God gave them up to uncleanness." To act out themselves their own lusts. First of all they dishonored God. Then God let them dishonor themselves. If man had stayed with God all these lusts would have been controlled. God would have taken charge of all that. You see this in the temptation of Joseph by Potiphar's wife. "How can I do this and sin against God?" Knowing God, God kept him from it. What is seen in the midst of heathen nations, the exceeding vileness and all the lusts of the flesh, are the results of man's turning away from God; and so it is now in Christendom.

God gave them up to these things for that they exchanged the truth of God for a lie. Now the creatures they worshipped could not keep them from sinning. No idol can keep a man from sinning. It is only one of his lusts exalted up to be an idol. There is nothing in the mere matter of worship to keep a man from evil; it is the person he worships. Hence, when a man does evil, a child of God does not find it worth his while to go and talk to him about the evil simply, the great thing is to talk to him about the Lord Jesus. There is a film over his eyes regarding Him. Get him back to Him. "If a man be overtaken with a fault, you that are spiritual restore such an one." It does not say, Go and scold him. Anybody can say, O dear, you are doing wrong, you have made a great mistake, you are on the wrong road entirely, what are you doing it for, and why don't you mend your ways? But a man that is with God can bring such an one back to God.

Ver. 26. Here he gives you a terrible showing of the uncleanness of man. People say there are things in the Bible you cannot and should not read. There

is nothing from beginning to end of this kind that is not a mirror in which one can see their own face. There is not a foul thing in creation but man can say, I know where that came from.

Their gods could not keep them, and He who could keep them they would not have. So he tells us that they have turned away from all that was natural and sweet, to that which was unnatural, and simply for lust's sake.

Ver. 28. Now another charge. First they would not worship God, and therefore these things were allowed ; then they would not have God in their minds or knowledge even. "He gave them up unto a reprobate mind." Suppose I was in a state of sin and did not care, and strengthened myself up more than ever in these lusts, took them as my religion—that is far worse. This is just what is coming in the end, after the church is removed and the apostasy comes. It will have its gradations : First letting God go, and then it will take some time before you can blot out every idea of Christ and get man settled against it. And that is what we get in the blowing of the seven trumpets and the pouring out of the seven vials in Rev. It speaks of three characters of man's action towards God. They have gone in the way of Cain, acting according to their own lusts, rather I might say inventing a new religion for themselves, pursuing the error of Balaam, and then perishing in the open rebellion of Korah. (Jude 11).

There is first the carrying out of lust, and then the whole mind in it—a reprobate mind, in open defiance and rebellion. That is just the way man is going to be taken ; the way Pharoah and his hosts were taken—in open battle against God.

You have what it is in their minds. That is not simply lusts but conduct, the mind being filled with

all unrighteousness. These twenty-one things that are in every man naturally, they belong to the old nature, and when he gets to deifying them and making them the substance of his living, what an awful thing it is.

He is speaking of the heathen here, because in the next chapter he takes up the Jew, in ver. 17.

CHAPTER II.

A little outline here of what we are going over will be helpful. The first fifteen verses of chapter i. are introductory, the first seven in a very special way ; after that there comes the statement of man's condition, and the whole question of his need, especially with reference to his guilt. "The wrath of God revealed from heaven against all ungodliness"—the nature ; "and unrighteousness"—the guilt ; and then to meet it all, the righteousness of God declared in the way of the salvation through Jesus Christ, and therefore on the principle of faith.

We have then the state of the world. First, the heathen ; the ground of course is that God has revealed Himself so that there was a truth held in unrighteousness. This is proving man's guilt. Then second, in this chapter ii., there were men among them that were instructors, teachers, men who could write books of morals, and have schools of morals, which were found among all heathen nations. That goes on to the sixteenth verse of this chapter. Then in verse 17 we begin the inquisition in regard to the Jew, and there is the indictment against him, and that goes on to chapter iii. 20, and all the world is shown to be guilty, and we learn that the wrath of God was revealed against all that.

Then in chapter iii. 21, we have God's mode of meeting it all after man has been proved everywhere guilty. And then we have the gospel wherein is revealed the righteousness of God on the principle of faith and addressed to faith. Now in order to have the matter to be of faith, we must sweep away everything else. Man will not believe if he has a prop of any kind left to hold himself up by. It is only by taking away every hope and refuge that he

has, and that is what is done in these early portions.

In chapter v. we have it in this form, that we were without strength and that we were sinners ; that is the moral condition.

We will take up to-day in chapter ii. the question in regard to the philosophers ; men like Socrates that could have schools ; writers like Seneca ; orators like Cicero ; founders of religion like Confucius ; and of others that wrote books of morals, etc. What about all such ? I do not have to inquire in history, and I would not believe it if I did, for man does not know how to write such things ; the Brahman would write about Brahmanism in a way that would make it appear immaculate, and so with each other class. Man is as fallible as the man he writes about, and he is as fallible as the writer. Man has no standard. I might think a thing very nice according to my standard, but who am I ? Therefore I do not go to history to learn what kind of man Socrates was, for it says, "Therefore thou art inexcusable, in that thou doest the same things." We are familiar with the sentence by a Latin writer, "I see the good and I approve of it, and I follow the evil." Well, this is the class of men that are being treated of now ; the men that knew better could teach others—not the common rabble that went on unthinkingly and had got into the terrible moral evils spoken of in the preceding chapter. This was to those who condemned others while they did the same things.

When I was learning about Socrates and Plato I found that they were liars among other things, and these men were all filthy in their lives ; probably like a good many to-day they could conceal things pretty well, but they were all idolators, and therefore it says God gave them up to do all these things and to

have delight in those that did them ; and therefore the tone of all heathen society would be such that there were a hundred things that would be allowed that were evil morally. But these spoken of here were rather more guilty than others, for the reason that they knew better.

Ver. 2. "But the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit such things." The judgment of man is not. That is where we get the fact that man cannot tell the truth. There has never been an instance of its having been so. He is under the prince of this world, v'ho is the father of lies. Man is deceived and deceiving ; hateful and hating ; that is the description of men. In Eph. ii. it gives both classes, Jews and Gentiles, " You being dead in trespasses and sins," etc., that would include your wise men and philosophers. " Wherein in time past ye walked according to the prince of the power of the air." This is worse still for it tells the power over all. " The spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience." If this same spirit was working in these Gentiles it would certainly not allow them to become any better. Then he comes to the Jews— " Wherein we also walked in time past in the lusts of the flesh, and were by nature children of wrath even as the others." You see in the end you come to find they were both alike.

Further down in that same chapter (Eph. ii.), " Remember that ye being in times past Gentiles in the flesh and aliens from the commonwealth of Israel." Well, if they had no blessings while God was blessing Israel, how could they live better ? " Having no hope," they were without Christ, and man today has all these things in Christ, and if they had no Christ, then they certainly were without hope. Put this and Romans i. together. How much higher

would the philosophers rise than the rest? High enough to say things and not do them.

If you want the description more perfect you can have it. "Out of the heart proceeds all manner of uncleanness," etc., and still further in Gal. v., "The works of the flesh are manifest," and goes on to state them. Now it never said the works of the flesh were love, joy, peace, gentleness, or any of those. God never attributes any of these to the flesh—the natural man.

It is becoming needful now to talk about these things, and show the falsity of all this doing without the blood of Christ, and the idea of building up on the character that man already has, and taking Christ simply as a teacher. Man has not anything in him that can imitate Christ, that can listen to Him or take a word from Him. For 1,500 years God tried a law that was not all that Christ was, but it was a good deal, and man could not even keep up to that, when he had everything to help him—was put in a land and all he had to do was to live quietly, and everything was done for him. He did not have to defend himself or his land even; there was no occasion for that; the land should lie there just as clear of defence as the planet Venus. Nobody could touch it. God would be about them. I am sure that a God that could have them blow some rams' horns at an enemy's walls and down they would come, would not let them suffer from lack of defence. Therefore I say, *they* with all to conduce to righteousness were the worst people on the face of the earth, and made the name of God to be blasphemed. So plainly the Gentiles could not be anything good.

Then we are sure that God's judgment is according to the truth. He will look into these things on the day that He comes to look into everything.

"And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God?" That is the first thought; the second is, "Despisest thou the riches of His goodness and forbearance and long-suffering?" Let us look at that for a moment. In Acts xvii. Paul says to the Athenians, men of the highest culture in every respect, religious as well as literary, who had shrines to their gods at every corner, and at last they erected one to "The Unknown God," "God hath appointed a day when He shall judge the world in righteousness." But up to this time God had winked at, or passed over their ignorance, passed by their iniquities. God said to Israel, "You only have I known of all the nations, therefore I will chastise you." He did not say He would punish every heathen murderer or Gentile idolator; He speaks to themselves alone. Dispensationally God was not dealing with anybody but the children of Israel.

When He speaks of "despising" the riches, etc., He means making light of, saying, "O, that's nothing," all that goodness that stayed His hand through all these centuries. He says, "Despisest thou this goodness and forbearance and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth to repentance?" How was that? Why just as it is between a father and a child, between a Government officer who has occasion to punish someone and the culprit he is to punish. I read of such a case recently. A man of the most hardened kind as far as obedience to orders was concerned, and an officer—Colonel or perhaps General, at any rate the highest in command at the place I speak of—who was almost at his wit's end to know what to do to reach this case. Everything had been tried on the man. At last some one

suggested that he try forgiveness. "O no, it would ruin all discipline in the army." But he tried it for the sake of the party who made the suggestion. He called the man in before him. There was not a particle of doubt as to the man's guilt, and what did he expect? The fellow expected just what he had received right along, the full sentence of the law. Instead of that the officer turned to him and said, "You are forgiven!" The man was as startled as if a bombshell had exploded at his feet. He could not understand it. There he was, free, not a thing against him. He was completely broken down and he never committed an offence again. God deals that way. Punishment never broke a man down yet. You cannot break a man down by beating. All these 1,500 years were meant not to harden them but to lead to repentance.

While almost every Jew He had to do with turned away, the goodness shown the Gentile resulted in repentance. Therefore we must preach the gospel, not the law. You can go any length when you tell about his love in righteousness; it has dealt with the sins and the sinner thoroughly. You are honoring him most by telling it out. It will turn the heart to repentance. The heart must break down when it finds that God has met the whole thing, laid it all on His own Son.

Ver. 5. "After thy hardness and impenitence of heart do you treasure up still wrath against the day of wrath?"—that is when the Lord shall come. Will you still be bitter against Him? The goodness of God shall be the means then of hardening?

Ver. 6. "According to his works" is the principle to-day for every soul that lives. If your work has been that abandoning yourself and all hope in yourself and taking Him, as a lost sinner, saying, "I rest

on the blood of the cross," then you will be judged accordingly, and where He finds blood he will not exact blood. As in Exodus x. He comes to this door and finds blood on the lintel and passes by. He stops at this one ; no blood has been there. He enters in and smites with death. That is the principle of judgment according to one's works. The grandest work one can ever do is faith. Without faith it is impossible to please God ; and faith is simply nothing at all but taking in what God has done.

Ques. "Is that the only work for which man will be judged?"

Ans. No. This is the condemnation now. The Holy Spirit is here to demonstrate sin because man believed not on Him. That is the great crime now. If a man believe in Him the ten million other things that he would do wrong would be swept away. Not believing on Him there is this vast array of other sins. The crime of crimes is not to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. As to the confirmed believer, that is not the question now.

Ques. "Does this wholesale statement here to every man include the Christian?"

Ans. No. It only includes man as man. That's all there is to start on. We have not come to the Christian yet. You had the wrath of God revealed from heaven against all unrighteousness of man *as man*. It is before we get to the Christian. Then we have in answer to that, God coming in righteousness and grace and offering you and me eternal life and forgiveness of sins, which comes in chapter iii. This is in regard to man as man, the Gentile and Jew, all pronounced guilty. You could not have the Christian there.

Ver. 7-9. "To them who by patient continuance in well-doing seek for glory and honor and incorrup-

tibility, eternal life ; but unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that doeth evil, to the Jew first and also to the Gentile." These are the very things God has presented before men. There is the principle ; we understand it in our courts of justice and in our families ; for him that does evil, punishment ; and to the righteous, reward. Take the first Psalm—"Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly," etc., "but his delight is in the law of Jehovah." What is the reward ? "He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water," etc.

Now suppose I go in before people saying, "Here, I have a great blessing for you. Something grand to tell you. The man that is perfect, that has never done a wrong thing, let him stand up, for I have blessings from God for him." Do you think I would get a chance to tell my blessings ? Why, there never was but One man that could get that blessing, and He is in the glory now. It is a description of Christ. The other man, of whom he says, "The ungodly are not so," that's you and me. It is a blessed thing that God has given us another Psalm, the xxxii. That brings something else in ; it takes up the ungodly one, and it has a way of meeting him. It begins, "O the blessings of him whose sin, whose transgression, whose iniquity," is covered, is forgiven, is not imputed, instead of being a righteous man in himself. He is cleared on another ground. God is determined to bless, just as in Gal. iii. He said, "I will bless," and He removed the curse of the law and brought in grace and met it all. Man measured by the first Psalm cannot get the blessing. But by the xxxii, everyone can. You do not do anything, some-

body else comes in, covers up, forgives, does not impute. God's way of covering up sin is to bury it deep down in the grave of Christ.

Christ came down and placed Himself under the law. He bore such a test as that and came out so well before God Himself that He might take our place ; take the tribulation and anguish that we had incurred. He takes it all away from us.

That is a statement of the principles ; the only thing is to make men take them deeply, so that they will not treat lightly this thing of all, being sinners. It will not do. It was a reality that Christ was forsaken on the cross, and every soul of man that sins is forsaken till he believes. There is too much levity in regard to sin and sins, and therefore no seeing clearly what Christ has done to meet it all, and the result is not peace but a kind of getting along somehow, singing and working and diverting the mind or something of the kind to smooth it over. And so the matter of what Christ has done is being lost. The atonement itself is being denied in so many places, and "doing" is pushed upon man everywhere.

Ver. 10. "But glory, honor, peace, to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first and also to the Gentile." God will render to every man according to what he has done ; to them who by patient continuance in well-doing, seek for glory and honor and incorruptibility, eternal life ; but to them that are contentious and do not obey the truth, indignation and wrath. You see, He offers more than they seek for. They asked for glory, honor, and incorruptibility—the highest things to the Jew. But He gives something better ; it is life in the new man—eternal life. This is like God. But still it was an offer for doing, and so impossible to be gained.

"But to them who do not obey the truth, wrath

and indignation upon every soul of man that doeth evil." This is the universal principle, and therefore He states it to the Jew first and then to the Gentile, because God had been now speaking to the Jew for so many hundred years and compassing them about with every overture and proffer of blessings, offering every plea to make them behave righteously. Not alone the law which said, "Thou shalt not," but also the promises to all who would obey. The prophets were full of these things ; He comes in an impartial way, to the Jew just as to the Gentile. This is stated not back in the first chapter where we were speaking of the heathen, but here where men profess to know better—"Thou that judgest another." You see how exact and careful the word is in that ? Not speaking the same principles (which were true enough probably) to the poor besotted heathen, but to the men who professed to know.

And now then, if you do right it will all be credited to you with God ; if you do wrong you will just as surely be found guilty. This then shows that God is righteous from the beginning of His dealings with man. We are to learn that He is as righteous in His dealings in the Cross. Therefore He closes that by saying that there is no respect of persons with God ; probably a very needed remark, because God had been taking a people for so many years and having them apart for Himself that it might look like favoritism.

Ver. 12. "For as many as have sinned without law shall perish without law, and as many as have sinned under the law shall be judged according to the law." That is, they who have not had the law to measure them will be judged according to what they had, and those who had that standard will be judged by that standard.

Ver. 13. "For not the hearers but the doers of the law shall be justified." We need do very little more than simply read these passages.

Ver. 14. "For when the Gentiles which have not the law do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves." That is, if they live up to what the law requires, are honest, truthful, clean, and without malice, etc., that is being a law unto themselves. Joseph was a law unto himself when, there being no law written to hinder him from stealing another man's wife, he refrained from her. But you see where it came from—his acquaintance with God. Noah was a law unto himself in the things he refrained from as well as in the things he did. There was no law written at all, and that gives meaning to what we find written in Hos. vi. 7, "They, like Adam, have transgressed the covenant." Adam was a transgressor because God told him not to do something and he did it. But from there down to Ex. xx. He never told man to do or not to do another thing. And then when He did they transgressed it, and that is what is referred to in chapter v. of this book, where it says, "Even those who have not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression." That referred to the Gentiles who had no law. They did not sin after the similitude of Adam's transgression, but all had sinned nevertheless. You see how he is closing in the argument of all the world being guilty.

Ver. 15. "In that they showed the work of the law written in their hearts." When the Gentile then did the thing that the law told the Jew to do, he was as good as the Jew, and had the law in his own heart. Now every man has a conscience to which God can appeal. An appeal can be made by the Creator, or by the word of God, or by Christ, or the

Cross, but it is to the conscience that the appeal is made. And so He says their conscience would either excuse or accuse. That is just what it has to do in all cases.

Ver. 16. "In the day when God shall judge the secrets of man according to my gospel." This day was not at the time of the flood, or the time of the Cross, or the time of the dispersion of the Jews. It all awaits the Lord Jesus being in heaven, His work being finished; and that is according to Paul's gospel. This is what he means when he says that He will judge the secrets of man according to my gospel. In Acts xvii. he gave this to the Gentiles in Athens. "God now commands you everywhere to repent because He has appointed a day in which He will judge."

Ver. 17. We have seen the conviction of the Gentiles in chapter i., and then in chapter ii. from verse 2-16, the philosophers and teachers—men who should know better—and now, third, the Jews. "If thou bearest the name of Jew." How much there was connected with the name of Jew. How much it told of God. That God had called them out for His, by name, that it might be known that there was one God, in opposition to all the other gods of the Gentiles.

"And boasteth of the law." Now the Gentiles had no law. It is a great thing in itself to have a law and know what God's mind is.

"Guides to the blind." That was the Jewish boast; they were the ones to instruct others.

"Having in the law the form of knowledge and of truth." That is what they got in the whole of their law, the entire system of morals given out from the Jew was that. And surely the people that had all that were greatly blessed and honored of God!

What then? They evidently prided themselves in them, for it says, "thou restest in the law and gloriest," etc. They knew these things, for we have here, "they approved of those things that were excellent, being instructed out of the law." They themselves instructed others. But the questions asked involve the statement that they violated every enactment of the law; and, while making their boast of the law, through breaking it dishonored God. They profaned the name of God among the Gentiles so that God had to say in Ezek. xxxvi. 21, that He took pity for His holy name which the house of Israel had profaned.

Circumcision was the mark of separation unto Him; but what is circumcision worth then? It is worth a great deal if ye be a doer of the law, but if you are a transgressor it profits nothing more than uncircumcision. It is like what James says about faith without works, as if it said show me your reverence for the law by obeying it, but they did not. Circumcision is not a thing simply of the flesh outwardly. He is a Jew who is one inwardly.

CHAPTER III.

Romans is full of questions ; just such questions as would rise in a man's heart and conscience that have to do with his being at peace with God. Man is continually having questions come up in relation to God, but they are all taken up and answered here, where the whole matter of man's responsibility is entered into, and how he can be just with God.

First, what advantage is it then to be a Jew ? Or what profit of circumcision ? Much every way. All those things stated in chapter ii. 17-20 are theirs ; but chiefly to them were given the oracles of God. God had been among them, speaking to them through Moses and the prophets. The scriptures are God writing to them. The scriptures will never have their full force with us until we apprehend them as God speaking to us face to face ; that we get into His presence thereby, that the conscience is brought into His presence to know His righteousness and the heart to apprehend grace in its reality. This is what we get the more we become acquainted with God. They cease to be a mere book and become God Himself addressing us.

There is this then, unto the Jews, that having the oracles of God they would have something by which they could be judged. That is a great thing—that you might bring it right down here in this very chapter and say, There, God said that ! If I am honest as a sinner with my question of how I can be just with God, I should appreciate this very highly—that God has set a standard. I can make use of the law to-day with every sinner. If a man comes to me and says, "I am not much of a sinner," I merely have to say, "Here, God says this, and this ; have you done all these things ?" He is convicted at once.

The fault of a great deal that is going on to-day is that the word is not brought to bear on the sinner to let him know what God thinks of him. This then was the advantage of the Jew. He could find out what was God's mind about things if he wanted to be right with God.

It is not simply to be trying to awaken some emotions within himself ; it is not simply saying God is love and will not be hard on us. There is much preaching of this kind now—that God is love and nothing else. If I wanted to come to God and wanted to know what He had against me, it would be vastly more to me to have it all before me and to see what the difficulty was, than to say, "O, He is very merciful, I think I can slip in somehow."

Suppose that I have not been shown out as a sinner by the word of God, and I smooth it over, thinking I can pray to God and worship Him and all that ; but directly I pass away to God and the tribunal, how will I stand before Him and have it all brought out then ? Would it not have been an immense advantage to have had it brought out entirely long ago ?

Ver. 3. "For what if some did not believe ? Shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect ?" Now all Israel had the word, and many of them did not believe. Does that change the character of the word ? Or, put it in this way. People tell you to look at the multitude of professing Christians. Why there is not one in a hundred that has been brought before the bar of God and had the whole question of sin settled.

When men have gone to preaching ethics, and Christ is an example, instead of the necessity of His death because of sin, does that make void the fact that man is a sinner and the wages of sin is death ? This is the bearing of this question. "Yea, let God

be true, but every man a liar." People are not willing to be found liars.

The translators use the phrase here, "God forbid." In the margin it is, "Be it not so." I dislike to use the word "God" where it is not used in the original. When we come to the phrase "God forbid," therefore, I always say, "By no means," or any other strong negative. The objection I have is that every use of the words "God" or "Christ" or "Jesus" is always instructive and has a special reason in it; therefore for man to put the name of God in scripture is spoiling it. God never has put it in once too often or once too little. "Let it not be so" is what it means.

"Could we say that God was law unto Himself?" Of course He is. He is sovereign; He has a right to do as He pleases and what He pleases is right. He is not only a law unto Himself but for you and me, too.

Ver. 5. I have spoken of the character of Romans as having so many questions to be answered. It enters so much into the matter of man's responsibility to God that it is well that there are so many questions. They are of the most vital import to ourselves. God has richer things than these in His word—He leads us in Ephesians, for instance, to look at our standing, the wondrous elevation to which He has brought us; and in Hebrews He takes us up clear into the glory, gives us the occupation for our hearts, the Son of God in heaven; but I would have no title to delight in Christ but by what is established in this book of Romans. Each book therefore has its special character, and this one is with reference to ourselves.

I have already mentioned the fact that the revival of Luther's time was on this question of how a man

may be just with God. The true revival of these days, according to God, goes much further and is occupied with the person of Christ; not simply "what is my state," but "what about Him?" Romans must establish us first, before we can take any delight in the presence of God and in the exalted and enthroned Christ. Indeed we shall dread His coming if we have not first found peace with Him. Romans settles the whole question of man before God, giving peace to the conscience. Then after that everything else is open before us, but we have no pleasure in them unless this is settled.

"But if our unrighteousness commend the righteousness of God, what shall we say?" That is like the question at the opening of chapter vi., "Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?" There is a good deal of acuteness in these questions. If the unrighteousness of the Jews commends God's righteousness, if that be that upon which He can work—and, in spite of it all, He can work out His plans righteously—what then? Why does He find fault? People say, "Why, if Christ had to die, and this was ordained before the foundation of the world, should He find fault with them that put Him to death?" They did it with wicked hands! (Acts iii.) The thing that God ordained that Christ should suffer—they had done it, with hatred to God and no thought of carrying out His purpose; no thanks to them. Yet His death was needful.

Such is the character of the question here; why does He find fault? It says, "I speak after the manner of men." That is the way man objects. How then could God judge the world at all? It must be on the ground of what they have done.

Ver. 7. "For if the truth of God hath more abounded through my lie unto His glory, why yet

am I also judged as a sinner?" In 1 Jno. i. it says, "We lie and do not the truth. If a man says he has no sins he lies and does not the truth." It does not say that he does not know it, but that he does not do it. Here then is the thought—my conduct is contrary to the truth, a lie, but it opens the way for the truth of God. He has to come in to meet the lie. Why should I be accounted guilty? And why not rather go on doing evil that good may come, as we are slanderously reported to say.

Ver. 9. We were told what the Gentiles were in a former chapter, but now it says they are both alike. How well these facts coincide with Eph. ii., "You Gentiles were dead in trespasses and sins, wherein ye walked in time past, according to the course of this world and the prince of the power of the air. Among whom we *Jews* also had *our* conduct in the lust of the flesh." All put into the same batch; all as sinners. Then, "God being rich in mercy," links it with Romans, which tells of God as having set forth Christ Jesus a propitiation (a mercy seat).

Now we have come then to this, after stating the great principle that the wrath of God is revealed against all that, both the ungodliness in the nature and the unrighteousness in the conduct, it is clearly manifest that all, both Gentile and Jew, are under sin and therefore under condemnation. And now the verdict is brought in according to Psalms and Isaiah. "As it is written, there is none righteous, no not one." Ephesians says, "The darkness of the understanding was because of the hardness of the heart"—no excuse then because of their not understanding. "There is none that seeketh after God." The seeking had to be all by God Himself. He has given you all this relationship to God.

Ver. 12. "They are all turned aside and together

have become unprofitable." In the end of the first chapter certain evil things were spoken of among the Gentiles, and it said they not only did those things but took pleasure in them that did them. Here you have it also : "They have turned aside together." To be a little more particular he says, "There are none that doeth good, no not one."

Ver. 13. "Their throat is an open sepulchre." This is the way we connect with others. First toward God it was all bad, none righteous. Now there is none that *do* good. Men talk about their dealings with men as good, while God is left out of the account. A certain one came to Christ and said, "What good thing shall I do that I may obtain eternal life?" He referred him to the commandments that had to do with man ; He did not try to offer those that had reference to God. How could they out of a throat that was as filthy as an open sepulchrē, and from a tongue full of deceit, say anything good ? The poison of asps on their lips, mouth full of cursing and everything bitter—every one of these statements is used in the Old Testament. These very Jews had them in their books. In Is. lix. God is speaking of Israel themselves, just as in Is. i. He says, "They were from head to foot full of wounds and bruises and putrifying sores."

Ver. 15, 16. This then is what they are toward one another. Now, in themselves, what are they ? "The way of peace they have not known, there is no fear of God before their eyes." "The fool has said in his heart 'there is no God.'" That does not mean that there was no God actually, but that he is ignoring Him—he does not take the trouble to deny, walks along without sense or responsibility about it. That is worse than simply saying there is no God. It is ignoring Him out of existence. It is a matter then

of the heart against God ; the other might simply be that the man was intellectually foolish. You will find these in Ps. xiv. and xxxvi.

While this includes all, we must for the moment keep on with the Jew. If we say the wrath of God is upon men we have settled the whole case. There is no remedy in man. How foolish then for people to talk about doing. They tell a sinner to seek God ; but it says nobody does seek Him. They tell him to stop swearing ; but it says his mouth is full of cursing. They tell him to stop lying ; but it says deceit is on his tongue. They tell him to pray to God ; but it says they do not. The verdict is in. Now instead of condemnation what do you get ?

Ver. 21. God has a chance to come forward and do all. "Now the righteousness of God *apart* from the law," for that was laid down upon man to tell him what to do. Now it is God Himself coming in His righteousness and saying, "though your sins be as scarlet they shall be as white as snow ;" and further along, "I am He that blotteth out your transgressions."

The righteousness of God that in the beginning met Abel and called him righteous and gave him the declaration that he was righteous because he brought blood, clear down to the cross, was ever acting in some form or other. It is manifest in the law and the prophets. All the way through the books of Moses we have this same principle. There never would have been a thing done for Israel from the start if it were not for this same great principle—"the righteousness of God apart from the law"—not on the ground of their obedience. It was unconditioned yet perfectly according to the law. This is the principle of faith. The righteousness that is by the *faith* of Jesus Christ.

Is it not a marvelous thing then, not simply to know we are saved when we believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, but that we are righteous, that God has made us so, and because He has done all this He can bring us in as children? It is something to rejoice in. It is no wonder that in Heb. ii. it is called "the great salvation." May God make us more and more to enter into it.

In the preceding verse we learned that by the law is the knowledge of sin. One of the things that people do not see is the sole purpose of the law. In Gal. iii. 19, it is said, "Wherefore then the law?" What was it for? It was added for the sake of transgressions; that is, to make them manifest. Of course then, it was not ever given to justify anybody. It could not be, because men had not ever anything in them that could keep the law. God knew when He gave man the law that he could not keep it. He meant to save Israel purely by grace. The serious thing about it is that the law is taken nowadays to be the rule of life, as though men could in any way live up to that and be justified by it.

We do not need the law to justify us if we live and are kept by the grace that saved us. (See Titus ii. 11-13.) It does not give a knowledge of God and it does not present Christ in any way, but the very opposite of that. It is not a revelation of God's heart or counsels or purpose or His delight. It never introduces into fellowship. It states none of the precious things of God, and you will find that those who are under the law persistently never have these things. They are terms entirely out of their vocabulary—fellowship and delight in Christ and true worship, the elements of our heavenly calling and standing, the very purpose for which we are saved.

God has thus revealed all in the place of condem-

nation that He may save both Jew and Gentile by grace alone. "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God." To come short is to be guilty of all. James says, "Whosoever offends in one point is guilty of all." That will measure the Jew of the highest distinction or pretension. No matter what they might have boasted of, they did not come up to His standard. Man is entirely guilty. It has all got to be shown out; these are the general statements that precede the demonstration of it. See how he places them together. There is no difference, all have sinned, being justified freely through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.

There is in this gospel enough for us to preach, and how sweet this is that He comes to man as man, just as He is! Proved guilty! When a man says he knows he has sinned, I tell him he has sinned infinitely more than he thinks he has, and if he wonders how he can get forgiveness for the sins that he knows of, I say I can tell him all about the forgiveness for all the others that he knew nothing about—by the grace of God through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. Surely this presents Christ in a way that is very attractive to hear.

Ver. 25. Here Christ Jesus is set forth as a mercy seat, just as the Jew had a mercy seat to which the blood was brought before God, and God accepting that, Israel was accepted as His people, and what He had against them as a people was forgiven, and they could go on for another year. And Christ is set forth perpetually as a mercy seat; not for a year or ten years, but for eternity. So I can say to a sinner to-day, "The blood is on the mercy seat, God has accepted it, you go where the blood is. Where Christ has been accepted as a sin offering you may go freely." We have the proof in the resurrection of Jesus

Christ from the dead, that God has accepted it. But more than this, we, that is now, have Him as a propitiation or mercy seat, through His blood shown for us ; but in the next phrase we learn that it is the place where God shows His justice in remitting sins in past times, "which He passed over in forbearance." What is the justice of this ? He did not then declare it. He now declares it in the cross. Then we gather the two together for ourselves, for them and all that believe back to Adam, and so "that He might be just and the justifier." It is a general statement, because justifying is not simply forgiving of sins ; it is more, it is making the man just, and therefore we have to look into the matter fully.

"Where is boasting then ?" If all alike were sinful and God justifies for nothing, as far as they are concerned, "where is boasting," indeed ? It is excluded. But by what law ? By anything they have done ? By the law of works ? No ! What then ? The law or principle of faith. Simply believing. Let us get this clear. People are sometimes told they are saved *for* believing. Not at all ; they are saved *in* believing. The work is done, believing is not a merit or payment or work I bring to God to meet the case ; so much faith for so much forgiveness, a little more and you are sanctified, and so on as if faith were pocket money. Why do they say now you must have continual faith in Jesus ? The whole work is done the moment I believe what God has told me about Christ. I have all that Christ has done and is, forgiveness of sins, sanctification, sonship, and yet people go to hear that falsely told and have come to add this to it. How simple Romans iii. is on the whole matter. It is not for believing that you get anything ; God has come and told you all about it and you simply take it and then you have got every-

thing. There is not a thing that God has found in Christ that I do not have the moment I believe what God tells me about Christ, His work as a man on the cross, and what He did to meet God in the matter of sins. Thus in Cor. we have "All things are ours." It does not say they are ours by any additional faith. You were in chapter v. all these evil things, "but you have been washed, sanctified, justified, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ." If this clears us you can tell it to everyone.

I tell a man to-day, who forty years ago believed on the Lord Jesus Christ and who then did not know what he had received, all the things that Christ has done and that he has had all these things for forty years. It is a new revelation to him, but not a new salvation. He has had eternal life all the time. There may be a new conversion, for that is change of conduct, but not change of condition before God. He has all the time been righteous before God. It is the purpose of this epistle to declare God's righteousness in all that is done, that he might be righteous (or just), and make righteous all who believe in Jesus. You will find a great deal of confusion in this matter, because people are not taking the scriptures as they are written, but rather theology and systems of men, some saying justification is forgiveness of sins, that is that you have the forgiveness of sins and then the righteous conduct of Christ is imputed to you under the law, and thus we, having that set over to our account, are accounted righteous.

Ver. 28. "Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law." Connect this with ver. 21. "Now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets." Add, here, that

we find in Gal. iv. that we cannot have the law to live by as Christians, any more than we can have it to be justified by. It gives us the story of Abraham's two wives and two sons, telling us that the son of the bondwoman could not have part at all with the son of the free mother. That the son of promise was the son of the free woman. The meaning is, the father begets the child ; there was the same father but two mothers ; so it says that the child that was begotten of the free father shall not be brought up by the bond mother. In other words, born free, he must be brought up free ; born in grace he must be brought up in grace. No believer dare go under the law. So it is "Drive out the bondwoman and her son." God has come to us and saved us by grace, and grace is to teach us and lead us all the way. This you see is exceedingly sweeping. It takes away nearly everything that goes on in Christendom. People say that if you take away the ten commandments there will be nothing left to go by. Hence we need assert grace in opposition to the law more positively than ever before. "Let God be true and every man a liar." It is the only way.

Ver. 29. This is what it means by saying, "*justified apart from the law*." Neither the Jew nor the Gentile were under the law for justification. These things are taken up further on.

Ver. 31. There is another question of more serious import than this. Whatever may be said about being under the law, there is one thing sure, it stood 1,500 years, and God said, Thou shalt and Thou shalt not all that time. There it was, over them and all their thoughts and conduct. It surely was of God—the law said to the Jew *death*, and he dies in Christ. Chapter vi. says reckon yourselves to have died. If I take that place, that is establishing the law which

stands clear and says, "the soul that sinneth shall die," and I have died in Christ.

We have then these four things : 1. God has set forth Christ as a propitiation through faith in His blood. 2. Boasting is altogether apart, because it is all of grace through faith. 3. He is the God of the Gentile also, as well as the Jew, on the principle of faith. 4. We establish the law by this very matter, and it stands out with its immaculate character, its terrific sanctions, all honored in the cross of Christ. No wonder the apostle says he would glory in nothing save the cross of Christ ! It meets all the exactations on the part of God and all the needs on the part of us. You see they are all answered in that. He is the God of Christ.

Hold fast to the word "righteousness." It is easy enough to talk about the love of God, but here the righteousness of God is so fully set forth and established—and this it is that so clears up everything. From all parts I see the need of going down into these foundation principles more and more.

CHAPTER IV.

Ver. 1. "What shall we say then that Abraham our father, as pertaining to the flesh, hath found?" This is linked with questions that had been answered in the preceding chapters: "Is He God of the Jews only?" "Where is boasting then?" etc. As we see in the gospel of John, Christ's hearers, the Jews, were resting on the fact that they were of the seed of Abraham, and Christ answered, "I know you are the *seed of Abraham*, but not his children." Now, had Abraham himself anything to glory in? What is the first mention you ever get of him? Did he get anything through merit? When God called him into the land he went very slowly; then afterwards, God made known to him that He would give him seed and that through that seed He would bless all nations. Why? Because he was good? No; he believed God. That was his righteousness. Any Jew that would ask the question with regard to Abraham would be referred back to the beginning. And there it is, the law of faith instead of the law of works. It is the same principle with regard to Abraham himself. Now this we notice, and also what comes further along in this chapter, while exemplifying what is said in chap. iii. The law (the five books of Moses) and the prophets (Ps. xxxii. quoted in this chapter), both illustrating the principle of justification apart from the law on the principle of faith; so that answering this question brings out this fact. "Abraham believed God and it was counted to him for righteousness." They had to believe this for that was just what it said in Gen. xv., "If Abraham was justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but *not before God*," and that we have in James ii., "Show me (not God) your faith."

Before man one might have something to glory in in his works, but not before God.

In 1 Cor. x. we get a glimpse of the heathen sacrificing to their idols ; it says they sacrificed to demons, and Josh. xxiv. tells us, "Your fathers dwelt upon the other side of the flood (Euphrates), and they worshipped other gods. From among these Abraham was called out by God and told "I will give," and Abraham believed God and that was his righteousness.

Ver. 4. "Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt." That is because faith is getting what God has done and says, upon my perfect ruin being demonstrated, or if, as in the case of Abraham—a poor miserable idolator—He calls me out, my faith gets all that He is. Of course, it becomes a man's righteousness in mind and conduct, and this is what Abraham found.

Ver. 6. "Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the men unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works." In Ps. xxxii., I called your attention to it before in contrast with Ps. i., "Blessed is the man whose transgressions are forgiven ; blessed is he unto whom iniquities are not imputed." It is all a matter of grace, and there is where He pronounces blessings.

The Jews had a way of naming the Psalms ; they labelled some of them the Asher Psalms, because they began with that word, which means, "O, the blessings !" The i., xxxii., and cxix. begin that way. These three Psalms go together. Of course as to Psalm i. we are all defaulters there. Christ was the only perfect One who came under that head. But we can get all in the xxxii., simply as sinners trusting God's word.

Ver. 9. "Cometh this blessing then upon the cir-

cumcision only, or upon the uncircumcision also ? Is this blessing then pronounced because of circumcision ? In Abraham's case, the one in question, was this blessing pronounced upon him when he was circumcised or uncircumcised ? Unquestionably it was before. See Gen. xv. 6. After his faith made him righteous God gave him this seal, that he be circumcised. So the question is answered ; they speak as though to be circumcised is something to gain favor, but it was after he had been given the favor that he received the circumcision, as a seal to it and sign of it, as we have this told out in the 11th verse.

There is great stress laid upon that as found also in Gal. iii. The purpose of God to bless, and that blessing seemed to halt during all the time that the children of Israel were under the law, as no blessing can come under the law, it requiring obedience which man cannot render. It speaks as though God were impatient of all that and now He means to bless, Christ having removed the curse that they were under who were under the law. So here God pronounced blessing upon Abraham in uncircumcision, and then he was circumcised that he might be the father of all that had the same spirit of faith. A father to believing Jews and Gentiles.

In Romans we find as in Gal. and Eph., the Jew and Gentile brought together. We learned in chap. iii. that there was no difference in their guilt ; now we learn that there is no difference in their being justified before God. So Abraham is the father of both Jew and Gentile that believe.

Ver. 13. Nor was it through the law any more than through circumcision. These were the two things that the Jew would boast in then and now, and he shows first that it was not through circumcision, and then he announces that it is not through

the law. And this seeking to be justified by the law, going about to establish their own righteousness, is a thing stated very fully in chap. x. of this book. He says Abraham then was not justified in circumcision, but in uncircumcision ; not under the law, but living before the law was given ; not by works of righteousness, but by God's mercy—this is the thought then that is brought out here.

Ver. 14. Here we go a little further into Abraham's history. The promise spoken of in this verse would be unfulfilled about many nations. The law works wrath, and it kept the Jews 1,500 years from receiving any blessings that were not unconditional. The conditional ones they never lived up to. It may be well to refer to 1 John iii. 4, where in the old version it said, "Sin is the transgression of the law," and in the new version it is changed to what it should have been in the first place ; it means sin is lawlessness—sin is not in the man ; the act is sin, but vastly deeper is the sin in the man that makes him sin. He tells us in Rom. v. that there was sin before there was law or transgression, but then he says there is no transgression without a law. Very simply understood that is. It shows you what the law is for, to bring out transgression. Here is a man that God has favored, the Jew ; and there is the Gentile, but he is left out for a time, and one might say, is the Jew better than the Gentile ? Put the law about him and see. He steps over the line—transgression means stepping over. Solomon said to a man, as long as you stay in Jerusalem you can live, but as soon as you pass over the line you shall be put to death. He stayed there for a few years, and, getting tired of being in one place, stepped over the line—and was put to death. The Gentile did precisely the same things that the Jew did, but as there was no law in his case there

was no transgression. The sin was there nevertheless.

Therefore, to say that sin is the transgression of the law is not the truth, and the word does not say so. It is lawlessness.

Ver. 15. It could no more be by the law than by circumcision, because it must be by pure grace. Faith and grace always go together ; God acting for Himself in grace, and faith receiving it.

We have three different things told us about Abraham. First, he was justified simply through faith ; second, not in circumcision nor under the law ; and third, believing the God of resurrection, which comes in afterwards.

Ver. 17. I have stated that there were two places in Abraham's life to which this being declared righteous because he believed God referred. One is in Gen. xv., when God gave him the sweet declaration that he should have seed. He believed God and it was counted to him for righteousness. But like every matter of faith the first act of faith involves a great many others. If I believe God in regard to my salvation, it involves so much that I keep on with Him, learning and receiving and all the time growing ! Saved as to soul we care to be saved in body ; this is contained in our salvation ; and then all the way we are to be kept also, and His word to be received by the Holy Spirit, and Christ before us as an object all the time. The first faith gets all the rest. We are justified by faith all the way along. That is what we learn in Hab.—it is not simply a man justified the first moment, it is for the entire way—“the just shall live,” meaning keep on living, by his faith. The just man before God is the one who has nothing of his own to live on. The sustaining thing is God's word, and the power of apprehension is the

Holy Spirit, and the object of all that living is Christ. So in speaking of a believer I am speaking of him all the way through.

Phil. i. 6, speaks of living---“He that has begun the good work in you will perform until the day of Christ.” So while Romans places us before Him just in Christ risen, it also brings out the life and the principle that sustains that life continually. So we have two instances in regard to Abraham, and to-day the second one is that to which attention is called. It was a great many years after that of Gen. xv. before this came in actual statement.

After God had told Abraham that he should have seed, you remember that he took Hagar to wife by the advice of Sarah, and for years God maintained a reserve toward him for doing so; for it was not faith. Just as many a child of God does a thousand things without acting on God’s thoughts at all, but on his own. But people say, Does not God use means? Yes, but it does not say that you should use means. Your business is to wait upon Him, and listen to Him, and if we do not know what to do, do nothing.

Faith gets as much by waiting as it did at first by believing. So that we see Abraham, a man of faith, not acting in faith, but simply according to the word of his wife; and then for nearly a score of years without a word from God on the matter, and he might have been flattering himself all the while that that was the seed and that Ishmael was to be the one through whom God was to bless the whole world. God had to come to him after a time and tell him something entirely new. It had to be a revelation of God, and it was this (Gen. xvii.), “I am the Almighty God; walk before me.” Not simply before God who promised him seed, but before Him as the Almighty God, showing him how it should be accomplished;

and that was perfection—all he had done, imperfection.

According to man there was no hope in Sarah. Moreover, Abraham's own body was spoken of as dead, besides Sarah's, and that was what God needed to show His Almightiness. He did not say this to Abraham away back in the fifteenth chapter, but Abraham having believed God back there, is still ready to believe Him, and the joy of his heart is told out in that laughter before God.

Faith by which I am justified as a sinner is the faith by which I am afterwards led along, taking in more and more of God, and still further justifying my whole life. It is not simply getting life, but living by faith—a very much needed lesson, and often-times omitted, because they did not see the word “also” that is given here.

There is nothing so grand as the almighty ness of God. Its full expression for us is the resurrection. The other case of this same faith is shown beautifully in the matter of Isaac after he had lived nearly a score of years, when God said to Abraham that he must offer up his son at the place He would show him. Now he did this, simply believing that God was Almighty, just as he believed that He could give him a child in Sarah's womb, and knowing that the child after being put to death could be given back to him. God, seeing all this, said, “Now I know that thou believest.” It was testing to see whether Abraham was *living* by faith. Abraham, you will remember, had left his faith for a time in taking Hagar; now God has told him anew that He is the Almighty God, thereby giving his faith something to hold on to, and then He wants to see whether he is true to it.

The word “tempt” used in this case should be “try” or “test,” and this same substitution should

take place all through the scriptures. The difference between Christ being tested and our being tested is that we can sin and He could not. If there is any weakness a test will bring it out.

Abraham's faith then was not simply a faith that gets life, but a living, walking faith. Well then, is all this written simply for Abraham's sake, who believed that God could raise from the dead, that God could quicken whom He would, or is it written for our sake? See how we get all the effect of Abraham's faith,—“but for our sake also, who believe on Him who raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead, who was delivered for our offences and raised again for our justification.” In the case of Israel, the first act connected with their deliverance from Egypt was the blood on the door-post. On the ground of that they were led out. But shortly after they came to the Red Sea. Now, they believed Moses about the blood on the door-posts and God met their case, but would they believe God still further? Instead of leading them up by land through the Isthmus, He led them down by the Sea. The blood shows that He had distinctly marked them out as His—but will they still believe Him? So He places a Sea in front of them, and now there is need to see what faith will do, whether the faith back yonder of the blood will last! Well, they come to Moses and cry to him, and Moses cries to Jehovah, and God says, What do you cry to me for? It was not a time for praying. That is the mistake thousands of people make. They should not pray at such times, they should believe. They belonged to God, they could not move a step but by Him, and now He says, Go right along there as I bade you; and He told Moses to lead them, and to test that faith more He brings Pharaoh behind them, with the Red Sea still before. Have they -

faith? No! They have faith enough to pray to God but not enough to believe Him. So He says, "Speak unto them to go forward."

John tells me I have eternal life; what is it? Simply existence? Why, a babe has life, but what is it going to do during the fifty years it may have to live? The fact that he is born is a marvel of course, but then he has got to learn how to act after it all, so he is taught by the parents, books, etc. In such a way God comes to me to tell me what that eternal life is. In 1 John I learn of its display in two ways—righteousness and love. In Romans I am told about believing on Him and getting the life and then that I shall be delivered clear through—kept along and held. But I am getting new revelations all the time by His word. In chapter viii. I learn that the Holy Spirit is the power that keeps me the entire way, and further, that I am an heir, brought into fellowship with God. Everything is as true with the little child as it is when he is a man. These things are written for us that we may get hold of the whole matter.

I will rest on God now that He delivered Christ for my offences, but He also raised Him up so that I might be made just, which is more than forgiving my sins. You see the two things are distinct. That is the reason it says, "Believe on Him"—God. I have learned of Christ dying for me, and now rest on Him who has done all this, just as Israel who was led out by the blood rested; but they expressed it by praying, and God had to say to Moses, Tell them to go on. And then He delivers them not only by the blood, but by the Red Sea closing up—by death—over all their enemies, who were swallowed up. Through Christ I have my sins forgiven; in Christ I am a new man. This is set forth that God might be just in declaring me just; all in and through Christ.

You see how this brings me into fellowship—because the same Christ in whom I have found life is the one in whom God delights. There is the fellowship—we are one.

Ques. It is written, “He might be a father of many nations.”

Ans. It means that God had first of all said he should be the father of many nations; then He gives you here that he could not be simply of that one alone that would spring from him lineally, and He gives a reason. He brings in two sons.

Ques. Is there any significance in his marrying after Sarah died and having a family?

That is typical; Ishmael typical of Israel, and Isaac typical of the Church, and then the children of the third wife typical of the Gentiles which are to come after the Church.

We see a wonderful fact too in regard to Abraham. While it speaks of the deadness of his body, his faith in God made his own body fruitful, so that he could beget children afterward by the third wife. No wonder he is held before us as a pattern. It would have looked if God had let him alone as though through Hagar alone there would have been a very small line, from just one wife. God was not acting according to nature. In this day when all the higher criticisms bring God down to what they find in science, how blessed it is to get outside of it all and hear Him say, “I never purposed to act according to man’s methods.” For that reason He rebuked Abraham in the matter of his child by Hagar.

It is not reform, that is easy to think of and can be reasoned out, but I cannot ever reason out the idea of a complete new creation, perfect on a new ground in a new man. That is what God gives Abraham to understand—“I am not going to have a son by

natural generation, I am going to make him”—a new way of making.

God never purposes the reform of man. I am not reformed when I am saved; that old man is put to death and I am anew born of God.

To close this chapter very simply we have the thought “we believe.” He put Christ to death for our offences and raised Him up for our justification. We come out of this chapter iv. justified by faith, *in peace*, as we read in the opening of chapter v.

CHAPTER V.

What a delight one can have in these things we have been going over of late. We have learned a great many new things since we have been in Romans. The whole subject of the book is the righteousness of God in saving—a matter that is left out very much—and the fact that we have been led into it day by day has been exceedingly precious to my own heart, but whether I ever say it right or not I rejoice that it is just as it is.

God's righteousness is manifested all the time in bringing us up into His presence to be and live with Him. We come to an exceedingly precious portion now, a summing up of all that we have gone over.

We have been shown our title to take our place as children of Abraham in being believers. These things are written for *us*; we believe Him who raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead. It is not believing Him either, it is believing *on*, for it is not the first act of believing, but the fact that we keep on with God, believing on Him. It was the same with Abraham; not the first believing which was counted to him for righteousness, but also his believing God regarding Isaac—that was counted his righteousness also. So it is “Believe *on* Him.” As a believer I am believing what He says all the time. That is a new fact.

What do we get then? Justification. Now, he says, “Being thus justified, being made righteous through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” I prefer this to “Let us have peace,” as he is all the way stating conclusions, and so I would accept the old version in preference to the new in this case. Even the new version has it in the margin. “Peace with God!” There can be no more

questions after that. From this time forward we have this matter of sin and guilt eternally settled with God. It does not make any difference about having peace with man ; that is not the question. It is by the one simple matter, "through the Lord Jesus Christ."

Do not tell people that they get peace or salvation *for* believing. We are told what God has done for man after he has been found guilty, and we simply accept the fact. That is the only link we have with it. Then God cannot have anything against us. But more than that ; we have also access into a standing —this position of favor wherein we stand. That is the word "grace"—favor. In the person of Christ I am as near as He, for my standing is in Him. Forgiveness of sins would not give that. If that were all I get, I am still a vile sinner ready to go and do worse, but this is a position of favor.

Follow these thoughts as they come : First, peace ; second, a position of favor ; third, the glory. No question about either of them. They are as perfectly settled as that Christ lives, and all these things are told us in these two verses. "The glory of God" refers to the ages to come. We should read "hope" with the article "the" before it, because it is definite. And it always refers to the coming of the Lord Jesus. A little while ago I was asked to speak on the coming of the Lord. I spent a great deal of the time in getting ready by showing that we cannot hope to be saved. Nobody has any business with hoping to be saved. If God is true and Christ has died we have authority to say, "I am saved." What are you going to hope for then ? For the coming of the Lord, of which I am as certain as that I am saved.

We have peace as a result of faith, and glory as a result of hope. Do not get them mixed ; hope for the

glory, know you are saved. You can never do anything to get peace. If I am asked, have you made your peace with God? I answer, No. It was done 1,800 years ago, and if it was not settled then, all my making will not affect it now.

Ver. 3. Rejoicing in the hope of the glory is not all; there is another thing of joy here. "We rejoice in tribulation also." You will notice that we have two points here. I am saved by what Christ did on the cross and God did by raising Him from the dead; and yonder is the glory—and I am standing between the two. My standing is perfect; I am in favor of God, but I am between those two points, and in that position down here in the wilderness there is always tribulation and plenty of it too. Does the tribulation affect either the work on the cross or my getting into the glory? No. Therefore we rejoice in it. What is it for? It does not undo Christ's work; it is to bring these things home to me so that I enter into them practically.

"Knowing." How do we know? Because we know that Christ has saved us and raised us up for the glory. Then do we not know God? Well, then, we know that tribulation is for some entirely different purpose than to test us as to whether we are going to be lost or not. We are righteous in Christ, as righteous as He is, so we have no trouble about that. And therefore we know that the tribulation does not mean wrath from God. It may mean wrath from Satan—we must expect that, but the very fact that we have this tribulation is to make us rest more and more on Christ.

Ver. 4. "And patience works experience." That is, I am proving it, as we have it in chapter xii., "proving what is that good and acceptable will of God." We are proving as we go along all these

things, not resting on cold facts—that is what experience means. We are testing the whole of what God said practically.

Ver. 5. "And experience, the hope." In Col. i. we have, "Strengthened according to the power of His glory *unto* all patience and long-suffering, with *thankfulness*." What did it? The power in the glory. I think that the fact that the hope of Christ's coming is the one thing that is placed in scripture as the argument for every Christian grace, should be understood more clearly. There is not one act of the Christian that is not urged by the Lord's coming. For purity of walk we have, "He that hath this hope on Him, purifieth himself." It is so every way. Everything in Christian living is founded on Christ's coming. It tells us that He came down to save us for what is up there; it does not say that He saved us for the sake of the wilderness, any more than God went into Egypt to get Israel for the sake of having them in the wilderness. He never speaks of the wilderness in Ex. iii., where He is talking about their being brought out. Christ's work then involved a saving of spirit and body, and it is not yet complete, and so we stand here between the two, waiting in the hope.

All that is connected with the present dispensation is assurance. It is because Christ has *done* everything. If I was standing on the other side of the cross, my faith would say, I know Christ will die for us and all that, but it would not have been settled practically. But now God tells me that it is *done*. And what else? In Heb. x. the assurance of *faith* in regard to what Christ has done; in Col. ii., the assurance of the understanding of the mystery. In Heb. x. again, the assurance of the hope. Thus faith, love, and hope all have their specific assurance.

The fact that everything is settled is the thought here.

We have here simple statements in regard to our rejoicing in tribulation. In Thess. v. it says, "In everything give thanks." Peter speaking of tribulation says, "The spirit and glory of God resteth on you." How did we get along without the hope, brethren? We did not get along, that is the truth of it. There is no Christian character without the hope of the coming of the Lord. The next thing, then, is to go and reign with Him, and that makes us rejoice in the tribulation that goes before.

In the next verse we have a remarkable reasoning, I might say. It is God's reasoning on what He has said and done. It begins with verse 6 and goes through the 10th. It is immediately connected with what we have had. People say, Does not tribulation mean that God is angry with you? O, no. "For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly." It was demonstrated that we had no strength by our not being able to obey the law. It showed us ungodly, too—well, Christ died for the ungodly. So when it is asked if these tribulations that come are not a sign that God has something against us, I must answer, "When He had everything against us, Christ died for us." Now look at a man's way of doing in similar cases. Some people have died for others; quite a good many for those they loved very dearly; but God thrusts out His love for us in this that while we were still *enemies* Christ died for us. When I was good for nothing at all for God, Christ died for me. Does that look like hatred? Much more now that I am saved, is the thought. This brings in something new—it is through Himself, it is by being in Him.

Another form of putting it is in the next verse

"For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life." We have the very life of Christ now, down here in the midst of everything evil ; so nothing can touch me. Take Job who was a righteous man before God. Satan was going to test him ; and when God said, Very well, test him, he did one thing and another, but at the last God said, You may touch everything but his life. What difference did it make to Job if his life was not touched ? And what difference to us if we have life in Christ what tribulation Satan can raise up against us ? We were saved when we were sinners, and now that we are sons we are in Christ and shall be safe in His life. It is very wonderful, but not more so than it is clear and sweet.

Ver. 11. We had peace, grace, glory, rejoicing in the glory, rejoicing in the tribulation, and now finally we have rejoicing in God also. Always notice the word "also" when it comes in. And also the word "yet" in all of these verses. "While we were 'yet' sinners." "While we were 'yet' without strength." It is exceedingly important this way. You have been going over in the first three chapters the entire trial of man as a Gentile, teacher, Jew. In all cases you have found him guilty. It took a good while to bring that all out. God was from the creation down to the flood, from then to Abraham, and then down to the Cross. It took a great while to bring it out that man was guilty, completely, and without strength. After all the dispensations (dispensations have this involved in them, the trial of man, the corrigibility of man, the possibility of there being something in him), one after another were all tried, and he was found to be nothing better than a murderer ; "yet" a sinner ; "yet" without strength ;

it means after all these accumulations have been brought out. In the end of this chapter we will have need of this thought. Now if we are in that Man can anything be against us? God against us? Never. In chapter viii. we get, "All things work together for good." Then we can rejoice in tribulation.

Then naturally we come to the text, "We rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ," in all these things. Why? Because I have already received the reconciliation. I am already reconciled to God. Who did it? Not I; His son. The new version has put it "reconciliation," and that is right. Before it was atonement, which was incorrect.

Ver. 12. "Wherefore as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." We have had in a former part of the chapter certain conclusions, and especially in the verses immediately preceding this, justification of *life*. That is not simply Christ bearing my sins, it is being in the Person of Christ and so made just. And thus it begins here with "Wherefore."

We have had to mark very carefully the line of thought as we have gone along in Romans. I call your attention to this "Wherefore." Some make a division of the book here, as though the former part took up the question of *sins*, and this the question of *sin*. Sins are acts; sin, the nature from which the conduct flows. And now that God is acting in righteousness to save, we must not only have sins dealt with but sin as well. It does begin here demonstrating it, but it is by no means the first statement of it. You might pick my pocket and I would forgive you, but that would not make you an honest man; so it is not enough therefore to have sins forgiven. I am not a justified man because my sins are forgiven. I

must be dealt with myself ; that is what it means by saying, "being justified." Therefore I have peace, for I am in the Man who made my peace. You must be another man to be happy. The sinner cannot be happy in God's presence even though it were possible that all his sins were forgiven, if that is all. Israel had God come down among them, saying, "I have nothing against you because of the blood on the door-posts." A redeemed people and a new people practically. No Gentile could have joined them, though Gentiles were in the same land—*i. e.*, Canaan. God would not allow them to have the same things at all. The Philistines had come from Egypt also, as well as the Israelites, but had they come through the death as set forth by the Red Sea ? No, you get nothing of that. Therefore you can see what wide differences lay between them. Israel had a right to be happy in God, but a Gentile could not be ; he had to be circumcised.

You remember in Ps. cxliii. 2, "Enter not into judgment with thy servant, O Jehovah, for in thy sight shall no man living be justified." So in chapter vi., we have it, "He that is dead (or has died) is justified from sin ;" not that he is forgiven. Of course I anticipate in saying this as well as that above, as we will come to it presently.

How do we get into this condition in which we have personally to be dealt with ? Through Adam. "As by one man," etc. That is our condition, and so the next verses go on to say, "For until the law sin was in the world ; but sin is not imputed where there is no law." There were just as great sinners before the law as there were after it. Men everywhere from Adam down were sinners. Sin was in the world until the time of the law. We find what the law came in for at the end of the chapter, simply to

prove sin in those that were under it. "But sin is not imputed where there is no law." Go back and see if it was. Did God impute anything to Cain? He did not say, "Go out of my presence a sinner." He simply left Him—never to be punished even. He was not imputing trespass to him. In all that followed down to the flood you will find no imputation of sin or guilt. You get a chapter of their entire history, what great men they were (Gen. iv.), and how they flourished, but God was not imputing at any time as far as we read. If man goes on loving other gods entirely, God is not imputing. To be sure the flood comes and sweeps them all away, but it was because they would not accept the way of safety—the ark. God said to Noah, "You only have I found righteous." He had never imputed anything to them all that time, and yet they were corrupt and violent. Doubtless the sons of Ncah were as bad as Romans tells us they were, but it was not imputed to them then.

He calls Abraham out from among the idolators. In Josh. xiv. we are told they worshipped other gods, but not in Genesis. God told him to be separate from the Amorites, but He did not impute anything to the Amorites. Then we find from Abraham springs Israel in bondage groaning, and God says, "I have come down to take them out of all this." Is that imputing anything to them? But were they not sinners then? Just as much afterwards as before. In the wilderness before the mountain that shook with God's presence when the law was given to them, how He bears with them, not saying anything against all their iniquities, meeting all their murmurings as a woman meets the fretfulness of her sick child. But as soon as the law was given it was *all* imputing. A man might be brought up to thieving all his life, far

away somewhere among the tribes where certain communities think it all right to steal, at least from their enemies. And suppose after a while he comes to this country where there is a law against stealing ; he is not a particle worse than he was before, but here he will be punished. The law will not take notice of what a man's thoughts are or what he has in his heart, but what he has done. The guilt of being a sinner is never charged upon a man if he has never heard of the remedy for it. "This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world and men loved darkness rather than light." No matter what the people were, if they believed on the Lord Jesus Christ they were forgiven everything ; therefore not believing on Him is the one thing that is charged as sin. He does not say, All are guilty, but all have sinned. In Hos. vi. 7, as I referred the other day, we get a reference to what we have here regarding the sinner after the manner of Adam. "That they like man (it means Adam, as the word is Adam) have transgressed the covenant." This is in connection with the verse "sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression." There was no law put down from Adam to Ex. xx., but from there all was transgression down to the Cross. Thus you keep the distinction between sin and transgression ; sin is the nature, and transgression is the infraction of the law, and each action is sin. It is exceedingly important inasmuch as we are going to get in this book the whole matter of God dealing with sin.

Ques. What would a man do at that period in order not to have spiritual death ?

Ans. Simply to take his place before God as a worshipper repudiating himself. You get a type of it in Gen. v. in the beginning of a new line in Seth. A peculiarity of it is that after speaking of the whole

line of Cain as living, in the other case in every instance except Enoch, who was translated, and Noah, they all died. Meanwhile the Cain tribe were living right along. You do not hear a word about their dying. Of each of the others in their order, however, it says, "And he lived so many years, and did so and so, and *died*." That is typical for you and me.

As related to Adam we became sinners—the proof of it is that death passed upon all for all have sinned. Then it is added, "Who is the image of Him who was to come." This gives us two heads, Adam and Christ. We have to look now at the contrast between these two heads, and the following portion (verses 15, 16, 17) are parenthetical, and each of the three verses contains a special thought about the contrast.

In verse 15 it says that although he is the image it is "not as the offence;" that is, not the exact measurement of the offence. The damage that was done to me in Adam and the blessing that comes to me in Christ are not commensurate. It is looking at sources. In other words, I get more than the first head in the second, even as to quantity, looking at them simply as sources. In Christ I get vastly more than I did in Adam. That is the first statement. "For if by the trespass of the one, many died, *much more* did the grace of God and the gift by the grace abound." Much more is the thought. It is simply a question of sources—in Adam I get one thing, in Christ I get something else, and more abundantly.

In verse 16 he gives another thought. "Not as through one that has sinned." You notice the first was about the *person*. This is the result, the *gift* is now brought in question. More than that too, because a gift is a thing *communicated*. I would divide it in this way: Verse 15 looks to the sources, verse 16 to the communication. We get communi-

cated to us a gift from this source. Well, we got another gift from the other Source—the gift of death from the one, whereas from this I get the gift of Eternal Life and righteousness. “For the judgment came of one act.” Not one man, but one act. “But the free gift came of many trespasses.” Now see the difference. One act of one man brought us into condemnation. That is all Adam had to bestow on us. Now in the other Man—covered with our many trespasses, all the result of our gift obtained from Adam—the free gift from Christ covered up all these trespasses, blotted out everything, and put us in the place of being just before God. You see the overwhelming character of the blessing we get through the second Man. The communication, then, was also greater.

Verse 17 looks to the *consummation*. “For if by the trespass of one, death reigned,” etc. What do you get now? Why, we *reign*. Death reigned, had absolute control, but now we ourselves reign in life through righteousness.

We had in verses 9, 10, this thought, that if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God, much more being reconciled shall we be saved from wrath. I was *in* Adam as a man; not simply through Adam, but actually in him, born of him. All these things were naturally mine. It is not simply like a man handing down a gift to another, but I am myself of the same nature as Adam. Now then, he says, Much more shall we get a reversal of all these and infinitely better things in the new man. Probably this will explain it better—if we had been restored through Christ to Adam’s innocence, you could understand He would not say, “not as the offence is the free gift,” but “just as the offence is the free gift.” Now, if I get nothing more than the forgiveness of sins,

that would not answer. I must be made an innocent man. But if I am put into *another* man, and if this second man is holy (which the other man was not), you will see then why he says "much more." That is a parenthesis to enlarge our thoughts about this.

So we go back to verse 12 and join it to the 18th. However we do not have to go back really, for it repeats a portion of the 12th in the 18th—"so then as through one trespass judgment came into all men to condemnation, even so through the one act of righteousness the free gift came into all men to justification of life." It does not say *upon* them as in the old translation, it is *into*.

There are many that have been taught all their lives about the righteousness of Christ being imputed to us. The imputed righteousness of Christ is quite a theological doctrine. I never knew a theology of any school that did not teach it. It means all His many acts of obedience while here in the flesh are set over to us, to our account. You notice what it says here, "By *one* act of righteousness." That settles it. The dear brother that went away and who will not come back because I told him there was no such thing as the imputed righteousness of Christ, would, I think, understand this. I hope so at any rate.

Now we go on to look at what this act of righteousness refers to. I am quite aware that this is the theological battlefield, and I know that all that is said about the imputed righteousness of Christ is improperly attributed to these chapters, and therefore I the more carefully go over them, in order to have you understand the matter thoroughly.

Ver. 18. "For as through the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of one the free gift came," etc. It is

the one act of righteousness in verse 18 ; in verse 19 it is the obedience of one. The question is pertinent, What is the one act of righteousness ? What do you owe God as a sinner ? Death ! That is the only righteous act you can commit. Suppose you begin to-day, after learning you were a sinner, to obey every law and every righteous act of God. That would not settle your account with God, would it ? Take the case of a murderer. He owes the State his life, but if he says, "I want to be obedient and do all I can to atone," I say, "Well, there is the gallows for you, that is the only righteous thing you can do for the State." Well, then, by the one unrighteous act of Adam I became a sinner, and by the one act of righteousness by which I have died in Christ I have become a new man ; or, by the disobedience of one I was brought into this condemnation, and by the obedience of one, or the one act of obedience, I am made righteous. It was Christ's death that paid the debt—the one thing demanded, because righteousness is a thing demanded. I owed God my death, and the only obedience I owed was that death and nothing else would answer. If I get my righteousness by Christ's obedience to the law, by Christ's active obedience to the law, by living perfectly according to it, I would get righteousness under the law—and it says, You cannot get it through the law. No ! You get it through death. This is very important, because everybody will talk to you about the imputed righteousness of Christ, referring to the righteous conduct while living—obeying the law.

Ver. 20. "Moreover, the law entered that the offence might abound." Notice we have not talked at all about our own actions yet, simply our condition as being born of Adam, and the other man coming in and our being in him. It says the law entered by

the way that offences might abound. God can bring out offences but He does not create sin. Now, what good did that do? Why it placed the more upon God to do to meet that nature righteously—to meet those offences righteously. Hence in the end of chapter iv. it said, "He raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead, who was delivered for our offences and raised again for our justification." You see then how that the two things, the offences and the man himself, are met. The offences are met in Christ's death—God raises Him up justified and a new man; but I am in Christ Jesus, I have died and risen in Him. Besides then having my offences wiped out and forgiven, I am in the Man that died and rose, I am a just man; whereas the old man was a very bad one in nature and conduct.

Then a new thought; the nature and all your multitude of sins added to your nature all wiped away, and a new man before God. In Adam I do not get the abounding of sin, only the sinful nature. In myself I get all the conduct that makes it abound, and in Christ I have everything blotted out; and hence, "Where sin abounded grace did much more abound." If I was only restored to Adam's innocence it would have been very sweet, but the next moment I would have sinned again and again have been brought down. And yet people are calling out all the time "Forgive us our sins," fearing always that everything they do will imperil their souls at the end. All these things flow out of the ignorance of the fact that we have gone over in verse 5 of this chapter, that I have died in Christ and risen in Him. That thought comes out in the prayers from pulpits sometimes—"Remember not the sins of our youth." This comes from the same thing. Why if I am a new man I cannot be lost. I wish I could give to you the

sweet impression this gives to me, the force and exceeding righteousness of it. But it may be if I state it plainly thus, your own hearts will take it up in all its richness and blessing.

It is immediately connected therefore with what we had in chapter v., and especially it refers to that part where it speaks about "much more being reconciled we shall be saved through His life." It is not His past life that I have in me to-day. Thus I am going on with the life of Christ in me. Before I had Adam's life in me. In chapter viii. he tells you at once that it does not refer to the body. All the life of the body is Adam life. But you have life in the spirit that is not Adam life but Christ life. He also says that by and by you will have a body also like His. "He that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead will raise up your *body* also." Is not salvation a wonderful thing? How large and deep it is!

There is nothing at all in the word of God that systematizes things as man does, yet every word seems to come in as being absolutely necessary, every verse is so filled. Hence these systems of doctrines that men make are exceedingly faulty and dishonoring to God. There is this one thing about them, that they are the very minimum of what they consent to. Here are 1,000 men say, and we will take what a majority will consent to, or rather what everyone will consent to. Therefore you have taken the very minimum of truth. If when they get together they all consent to the fact that we were sinners and that Christ had to die, that is about all you could get from the majority, and you have left out all about Christ's coming, the heavenly glory, and our standing, and everything else. These religions built up from such formulas are not only exceedingly faulty but decidedly evil.

CHAPTER VI.

Ver. 1. It was evident that the statement at the end of chapter v. would be met with a question, and that question presents itself right here at the opening—"What then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?" There was the abounding of grace for sin and sins, the "much more abounding" that we had in the last chapter. Now the question would be this; does not that open a way for looseness in conduct? Most assuredly that would be the case if it were not that "we have died." According then to the ordinary thought that justification is the forgiveness of sins only, that would be a most natural question, and the only answer that could be made to it is that here given—"We who are dead to sin, how can we live any longer in sin?" It is not that a man will not sin, but the thing that is done to him, putting him to death, does not allow that he should sin any longer any more than death allows a dead merchant to buy and sell among us any more. He is dead. How then can we who have died to sin be found any longer in it? And it seems to me that there cannot be anything more perfect than this answer.

Ver. 3. So he appeals to them, "Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death?" It is "Christ Jesus" you see. If I say "Jesus Christ" I begin with Him as down here and having gone up, if as "Christ Jesus," as being up there who was down here. He was made both Lord and Christ in resurrection (Acts ii. 36), a very essential thing in these days when there is being given out the idea that Christ's life is everything, and that it is to elevate the human race. Now this settles that in a moment. The very confession you made in baptism was "into His death."

My link with Christ was formed by His dying and my dying with Him. Christ is up in the glory, and to get to Him I must pass through death ; in baptism I am declaring that. I died in order to be joined to Christ. That settles the whole matter of imitating Him as a man. Forgetting that the very name of Christ involves resurrection, and that we were joined to Him in resurrection and not in His life down here. I do not know that there is a principle in this book that is more important than this. It is very plain that this is the fundamental truth of all that is given us about our relationship to Christ. “Baptized into His death.”

Ver. 4. “Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death ; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.” If I have died in Him the life I live now must be altogether different from the old. Hence this whole principle of grace does of necessity forbid and refuse sin and sinning ; because it makes us dead men, and the kind of life we live is another kind entirely. Not simply that I press you to do it, but that it is involved in the new relationship.

Ver. 5. “For if we have been planted together in the likeness of His death, we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection.” These verses are most complete and thorough answers. When Adam became a sinner and begat a son in his own likeness, the question was settled away back there. A man that did not take the place of death was not accepted, as in the case of Cain. Abel came as a dead man, offering death in his sacrifice, his faith apprehending the full acceptableness of it by virtue of the fat that was offered. People say sometimes, If you teach that, we can do as we please. Does not that

tell a tale ! Do they mean that a man can be as holy as he pleases ? No, they mean he can be as wicked as he pleases, and do all the things that man does please to do, which are wicked and bad all of them. They mean going into iniquity always. God brings us into a new man and makes the heart free to follow Him, and then it *is* "do as the new man pleases."

Ver. 8. "But if we be dead with Christ we believe that we shall also live with Him." In Romans we do not get as far as in Colossians, which teaches that we have risen with Him ; nor as in Ephesians, which says we are seated in heavenly places with Christ. In Romans "we believe we *shall* live with Him." It is going into the future. I am never more to be guilty of anything that will bring death ; death has no more dominion over Christ, and therefore no more over me. I have died unto sin as a nature, as a whole, as a body, once for all, and now I live unto God. That is the statement that we get in the tenth verse.

Ver. 11. "But reckon ye yourself to have died unto sin, but to be alive to God through our Lord Jesus Christ." Often one is met when speaking of this with such a difficulty as this—"But I do sin." This chapter is not looking into the practical difficulty of the case. It is not giving you practical truth. It is only the doctrinal statement. The object here is to answer a question, and you will notice that every Epistle will answer its own questions. When God makes statements He answers them in the same place that He makes them. Romans makes the statement of righteousness without works, and there the difficulty comes up at once. Are you not then in that, allowing a man to go on in sin ? And therefore it is answered and the answer is complete thus far.

When it says, "Reckon that you have died," etc., it means that you are to know it as an actual fact. If a man says to me "I do sin," I have to answer, "Doubtless, but you have failed in your reckoning; you do not consent to the death of the old man yourself."

Ver. 12. There is a little word that is practical here. "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body." You are living down here in this mortal body, and you are not to let sin reign at all. It is not to prevail. If I reckon that I have died to sin I have not let it reign. "That we should obey the lusts thereof." The sin is the nature; the lusts are the members, the individual acts that are sins. But sin is repudiated as a dead thing, therefore let it not reign.

Ver. 13. "Neither present your members unto sin as instruments of unrighteousness." In Colossians our members are to be reckoned dead; "Mortify (or treat as dead) your members which are upon earth," and he names them over. Let it be understood that we do not treat dead people by making provision for them. Now you go on in life without these members; reckon them as dead. Seek no way to gratify them. The old way was to surround one's self with the means of gratifying our lusts. As soon as a man gets money he directly finds his wants are multiplied. How much larger his house must be; how many thousand things he must now have that he never thought he needed before. That is the gratification of desires. He is no happier though he rises to be the king of a realm. By gratifying these lusts he is simply making himself miserable. And so he says, Do not do it. Make no provision for these members at all. Why? Because you have died. That is the answer to those who say, But I do sin!

Just as James answers the question of others, “From whence come wars, fightings among you? Come they not from your own lusts?” We have to make provision for something to eat, and to wear; in this we are cast upon Him who cares for the fowls of the air and the lilies of the field, and that brings us more and more to Him. All proper provision brings us closer into the presence of God, to rejoice in Him—in our absolute dependence upon Him. But beyond that is evil and the gratification of lust.

“Present yourselves to God as alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness.” Use your bodies that way instead of the old; all your faculties are to be used now with reference to God instead of with reference to man. We have in Cor. vi., “Therefore glorify God in your body.” I am dwelling in this body and it would be a sad thing if I could not glorify God as I go along.

Ver. 14. “For sin shall not have dominion over you because you are not under the law but under grace.” This seems to be one of the most triumphant answers to the whole question that could be given, and this is shown us in the Epistle to the Galatians. You can understand that man who wants to live a godly life, not apprehending the grace of God, will go and measure himself by the ten commandments and put himself under them, as men are doing by the millions. But this verse gives us to understand that this is the very thing to wake up sin and make a man sin. This we get in the preceding chapters. The law that could give nothing but a knowledge of sin could surely never rid us of it. It will tell you directly what the law could not do. Now it says you are not under the law, and that *therefore* you are not to sin. The law came in because sin was the dominating thing and it was to restrain it, but it never did.

Now, then, I am delivered from the whole matter ; taken out of that condition by being put to death, brought into the new man where the law is not the ten commandments but the life itself (Christ's), and now sin is not to have dominion over me. But like everything else God gives us He has a multitude of answers for every question. You will find that in the gospels Christ not only answers a question put to Him, but He will answer the *man*, and that in him which prompts the question.

Ver. 15. There is the objector again, and again we have the strong negative. Like everything we have had the argument is clear of itself, but there is no looseness in it. We have to follow it as He says it. The point is this, that being free from the law does not allow me to sin.

Ver. 16. "Know you not that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye ar to whom ye obey ; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness." Every man knows that in regard to servants here. A servant of mine must obey *my* commands. If you tell him to do something he owes nothing to you. Therefore a man that is in bondage to sin is bound necessarily to obey sin and to sin all the time. And on the other hand, a man bound to righteousness is necessarily bound to be righteous all the time. From the rising of the sun to the going down thereof I was sinning. I was obeying it with my whole heart. Through death that bondage is over ; I am not bound to sin any more, because death has come in to dissolve the relationship. Sin was my master but it is so no longer. If that was all that would be a great deal, but besides that I have risen through Christ and am in Him, and now have another master. It is righteousness this time. I am a servant just as much, only it is to

righteousness now. How was it before? I was going on with things whereof now I am ashamed. So He asked, What fruit had ye at that time? But now being made free from sin (as a master) you have become servants of righteousness (as a master).

People that are talking about perfection and sanctification use that phrase "free from sin," as God did not give it. As though I was free from sinning; that I have become so holy that I have not the slightest temptation to sin practically. I am to obey righteousness just as constantly as I did my former master. We never find such a thought as that in the whole history of Israel from Ex. xx. down to the Cross.

I have gone over the general thought here, and now I come back to verse 17. You see the "form of teaching" was about Christ risen after being crucified, and you have become subject to that, and that has brought you into a new creation. It closes with that wonderful statement, "The wages of sin is death." It is not tears or reform or forgiveness, but death.

CHAPTER VII.

You will see that this connects with what we had in chapter vi. 15, "What then, shall we sin because we are not under the law?" We have had one answer, but we are not yet through with the question. The first statement here is that the law has dominion over a man so long as he liveth. That corresponds with the former part of chapter vi., "He that is dead is freed or justified from sin." It is being dead that does it. The illustration is given of a woman held under the law of marriage to a man as long as he lives; if death comes in taking the husband away she is free as ever she was; but if she lives with another man while her own husband is still alive she is an adulteress. He is speaking here more particularly to those who are under the law—as there was a law of marriage among the Jews, which we do not hear of among the Gentiles. Now take this as it is stated here. The woman free to marry another on the death of her husband—through death delivered into the hands of another. "Wherefore ye are made dead to the law through the body of Christ." We have died with Him. We are dead to everything. If we were under the law we are now dead to the law. In Galatians, "Through the law we have become dead to the law." The law pronounced sentence of death upon us and we died under it. It is the same thought, but here it is simply looking at the fact.

There must another element come in to have me alive and fruitful, and so we find "that ye should be joined to another." Now this might seem not exactly parallel, because it is not a woman dying but her husband. Man living down here on the earth counted in the flesh the law that applied to him in the flesh,

and if the man dies the law cannot follow him to where he has gone, and therefore it is as if the law was dead to him. He is a living man in his new state, but the law cannot follow him, and therefore the law may take the place of the husband that was dead. Still, down here where the law applies, we could not say the law is dead, but we are dead to it.

What was the purpose of this? That we might bring forth fruit unto God. Before there was no fruit, as we learned in chapter vi. "What fruit had ye then?" Now we are joined to another man, that we may be pleasing to God and bring forth fruit unto Him. Then, applying it more especially, it says when we were in the flesh—that was the old condition in which they were under the law—"the sinful passions which were through the law." You will remember that it said in chapter vi., "Sin shall not have dominion over you because you were under the law." Now, of course, these sinful passions which were through the law, with which the law had to do, and which were condemned by the law, are dead. But now we have been discharged from the law, having died unto that wherein we were held. He was speaking to those under the law, not necessarily to you and me. Now being discharged from all that through death, what has the law got to do with me? It had to do with the man in the flesh, but I am no longer in the flesh. It is another kind of law come in. Suppose we look at it again in the marriage relation. The marriage law is the same but there is a new person brought in. Thus you see the marriage relationship and the two husbands illustrated the grand practical fact of my deliverance from all the bondage and trouble that I had. Under the law, my conscience being alive made me constantly unhappy because I could not obey it. That is the statement,

From verse 7 to 24 we have the statement of the condition of things while under the law, and it is the state of a quickened man. There is not a thing in the whole chapter that can be spoken of a sinner as such, even a Jew. It is the man that is wanting to serve God. "What shall we say, then, is the law sin?" You might as well ask the question about the first husband. Was the first husband bad? Delivered from the marriage relationship there and joined to another, one can talk about it and go back and tell the whole story of how sad the condition was in the old marriage state—and I presume many a one has that story to tell, probably while they are in it rather than after they are delivered from it. Let such a one tell out her story. What was the trouble that made it impossible for her to please him? Well, suppose it was because he was so particular about everything, every word I said, all that I wrote and did, my cooking, my housekeeping, my very mode of walking on the street. Everything I did was criticized. Was he a bad man? O, no, I was the faulty one; there was not a criticism but what I deserved, but there it was, we were not suited to one another at all. He was a very righteous, proud, exact and exacting man, and I was a poor loose-jointed creature, unsophisticated and unconventional, and filled with faults. The years I lived with him were years of torture to me and to him too. But now I am joined to one that not only understands me but everything is the sweetest that it can be in every way. That is just what one would say of the law. Was the law sin? No, but the law was very particular. It had to be. It is God telling man what he had to do to please Him. When man says, "All that Jehovah has spoken I will do," Jehovah has to speak, that is all. And you will find in Ex. xix. that that

was what they said, and He could not give anything less than what was holy and just and good.

I take it this way ; that it is after I am delivered and am talking about it. It is not any one necessarily ; it is not the Apostle ; it need not be you or I. It is not a Christian experience ; it may be the experience of a Christian. It cannot be the experience of a sinner, because a sinner is indifferent to what God says ; he does not care. It is one that wants to do right but cannot obey the law living in the flesh, and therefore it says, "I had not known sin but by the law." Why I would not have known lusting had it not been for the law which said, "Thou shalt not lust." It wrought from the beginning in me all manner of lustings, "For apart from the law sin is dead." Sin was in the nature, but when there was no law to bring it out into transgression, it was as dead. When the commandments came it was at once made manifest. I was the condemned one the moment the law said I must not do this and I did it. And to die in such a case was to be finding myself apart from God—for that is what death is, separation from God.

Ver. 10. "And the commandment which was unto life." You find that the principle of the ten commandments was this, "This do, and thou shalt live." You get in Gal. iii., "The man that doeth these things shall live by them." Suppose you cannot do them ; then the very thing that proffered you life becomes a cause of death. We see then that the man that violates one law, who is under the law, has died. As soon as a man is condemned to death he is in the eyes of the State as good as dead. From that moment on, to the State, he is dead. They treat him as such and directly bring him forward and slay him. This then is the thought—sin revived, and the law

which metes life brought me death. The law, however, was good and righteous and holy.

Ver. 13. Did that which was good bring me death? Why, good does not bring death. That which was good found no responsive goodness in me. What did it find in me? Sin. Then sin was the thing that did it; the law only brought out the sin, and the sin then became the occasion of death. "Sin, that it might be shown to be sin, working death," etc. Just as you learned in the end of chapter v. that the law came in by the way that sin might be made manifest. That was the purpose of it. We go on, step by step, learning this here; slowly bringing out the fact that the law was the occasion of my death, not because it was bad, but because I was.

Ver. 14. "For the law is spiritual, I am carnal." There is no affinity between the two. The law brought out the fact that I had nothing in me to respond to God. Now I ask here, why should any Christian plead for the law? Having learned that he is justified freely by grace, is a saved man and justified in Christ, why should he for a moment take the law? Surely the treatment of the law in this chapter would frighten anyone from wanting to be under it. I have left out some verses here, as I have brought in the substance of them. It is the flesh which makes me serve the law of sin, but with the mind I myself serve God. In speaking of this further I would say that while I do not believe it was Paul's experience, or anyone's necessarily, I believe it is the Holy Spirit's way of bringing it out to put in all these I's and me's. Something near forty times self is put in. It is to show us that if we get under the law we shall be occupied with self all the time. What a thorough occupation of self there is from verse 7-24. What kind of a life is that? Can you

imagine worship, service, fellowship, in such a life as that? Yet probably nine-tenths of the believers to-day are plodding over that law, and most of them in their own minds are under it. Do you wonder then that there is so little living above the world? Why the man is occupied with himself all the time, and there it is. Hence when he prays, how little there is above "Bless me," "Forgive me," and "Bless my work," and it is "*me*" everlastinglly. Nearly all praying is of that kind—deprecating wrath, asking for personal blessings, and I have heard so many times people say, "I do not believe in prayer because I do not believe in that kind of praying." I can only answer that if that is all they know about praying they have not known what it is to stand in the presence of God accepted, or what it is to worship at all.

If the woman were to sit around always telling of what a terrible time she had had with her first husband, I should say, "Don't you ever marry another of that kind." And it would be a strange thing if one who had married Christ should say, "I am going back to the old one—the law," and yet that is what men are all the time doing. And if it were for no other reason than this, that all are under the law and pleading for it, I would leave all the churches. An abomination to God is this being under the law. There is nothing in scripture that is more sharply spoken of than that, and how a man can stay in that which has that as its system I do not see. Every prayer meeting you attend is under the law, and all the singing is under the law. It is the beauty of the singing, the fineness of the choir, that people go to hear, and the whole principle is an abomination to God. So thoroughly is this true that Gal. iv. 9 sets it forth as idolatry and tells man that

they are going back to the beggarly thing they were under, which in their case was idolatry. Thanks be to God I am not there any longer ; I am joined to the new.

What of the fruit before ? Sinning all the time. Now he says the fruit is “unto everlasting life.” Here it is all joy, peace, patience and gentleness. I am linked with Him—that is all that and more. So get the thought of Rom. vii. in this, that it is one of the most triumphant chapters you can find. It begins by stating that you are not there at all under the law, and closes by thanking God that you are not there, and the intermediate is only to tell out what condition it was. Not that you are there or had to be there. And I think you will find that the question asked in chapter vi. is getting pretty thoroughly answered. The first answer was “How can you when you have died ?” The second was “ You have changed masters through death.” The third was “Like a woman who has changed husbands.” All these to illustrate this one fact. We have yet one more answer and it comes in chapter viii.

CHAPTER VIII.

We have seen in the progress of the teaching in this book that the whole matter of sin and sins is dealt with, and also the question of the law. We had the two thoughts—that we were guilty, and that we were without strength. The being guilty is shown in the conduct tested and brought out by the law, and the lack of strength was shown by not being able to obey the law. Both guilt and weakness then were shown. Then we die. “While we were yet without strength Christ died for the ungodly.” This testing of the law brought out the fact that we were ungodly in nature, and there was the condition of man. Then in due time Christ died for us. How wonderful it is! Then taking up more fully the question of the law in regard to that, we find wherein it was weak and that God in Christ met the whole matter.

Chapter vii. closed with the assertion that with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with my flesh I serve the law of sin. The very next thing then would be just what we have here, that the only way to be rid of condemnation is by being in Christ Jesus—according to the first verse here; and you will notice this—it does not say “Being forgiven there is no condemnation,” but “Being in Christ Jesus.” That is spoken of very freely and frequently, and it is needful that we should always see it. That forgiveness of sins does not free us from condemnation, because here we are sinners still and ready to go on and sin again, is the thought you are to get from this. And we had in chapter i., “The wrath of God is not only revealed against unrighteousness in conduct, but against ungodliness in nature. Hence being in Christ Jesus is the only deliverance out of con-

damnation. Herein is the difficulty with many a conscience. A man believes on the Lord Jesus Christ, and directly he finds himself in trouble again. Down he goes on his knees not knowing what the matter is but that he is in difficulty.

Many years ago in the case of a man who had lived quite an ungodly life but who was led to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ finally. He went on for a few days very happy in that fact, but one day he called me into his house and said, "I will have to give it all up. Yesterday I got angry and swore! I had been accustomed all my life to it, but thought I was delivered from it now." Well, I said, I am very glad to hear it! You found yourself out, didn't you? And you found that simply knowing that you had forgiveness of sins was not enough. Now you have got to learn that God puts away the whole matter in death, and you must find yourself in the living Christ, and that is the reason I am glad, for He has let you down to know where you are. Nothing will deliver a man in conscience but the knowledge that he is in Christ risen, and that he has been actually condemned and put to death in the Cross and has been raised up and is in Christ Jesus.

Therefore while I may say that I do not ever expect to sin any more, God has not thought that way of me at all. Every act of mine will be a sin. I get the deliverance then consciously by seeing all put away in death—the man included—and that I am established in the new man. "Being in Christ Jesus there is no condemnation."

Then, as if reviewing what we had in chapter vii., he says in verse 2, "What the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His Son in the likeness of sinful flesh condemned sin in the flesh." I have life in Christ you see. In the old

man it was sin and death, and in the new it is righteousness and life. Sin meant death—life must flow out in righteousness.

Now, then, looking back into chapter vii. we close it up in one line—"What the law could not do," etc. There you have all that we had in chapter vii. and part of chapter vi. We have covered 1,500 years with that one sentence. We have a new thing brought in now, God sending His own Son condemning sin—not simply sins, but the nature. What the law could not do God now has done. How? That all the righteous requirements of the law might be fulfilled in us. This could not be in Israel, but in us in walking in the spirit. We could not walk in the other way if we had not been told that we were freed from the old condition. You will notice that this is the principle all through the book from chapter vi. on—death, death, all the way through, as the answer to everything. We may thank God for death more and more. But He has introduced the word "flesh" here which has not been spoken of very much before. "The mind of the flesh is death." How much clearer this is than the old version which had it "the carnal mind." Now the mind of the spirit is life and peace, and the mind of the flesh is enmity to God—not subject to God, for it was proved by a law that was in action hundreds of years that it cannot be subject to God. The ruin in man's case was too deep and thorough for man ever to claim obedience in anything. So that they that are in the flesh cannot lay claim to pleasing God. He has got a man that can please Him, but the man under the law could not do it. Therefore we are ready for verse 9, "But ye are not in the flesh but in the spirit." That law of the spirit of life has delivered us from being there, and then it says, "If so be that the Spirit of God be

in you," and here is a new link. Of course we have had in chapter v. that "the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts," but now we have more fully to look at this fact of the Spirit entering into the new man. And then as an answering statement, "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ he does not belong to Him"—is not Christ's. Wonderful! that being Christ's I must needs have the Holy Spirit dwelling in me. One said to me, "How can I get the Holy Spirit?" She had just learned she had been saved. I said, "Why simply refer to Eph., 'In whom after ye believe, after ye have heard the word of your salvation, you are sealed with the Holy Spirit,' and in 2 Cor. i. also, 'He that has sealed us with the Holy Spirit is God who has given us the earnest,' etc." Well, then, I know that I have the Holy Spirit, because as a believer the word says He has given Him to me. I know this by the word of God. Not only so, but every one that is saved must have the Holy Spirit to mark him off as belonging to Christ. He gives them eternal life, and then also the spirit that dwells in Him. So if any man have not the Holy Spirit he is not Christ's.

Ver. 10. A new thought now. If Christ is in you, the body is dead. What does that mean? Why the Spirit is life. Your body has not received the life at all but your spirit has. You are a new man in spirit but not in body. You were dead in spirit and body. In Eph. we have, "You who were dead," meaning spirit and body. Further down in same chapter, "At that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and without God in the world." That is what it means to be dead. Then in 1 Cor. xv., "This I say, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God." You understand that flesh and blood means this body. So, you see, it is

separate from God. Not that God does not take care of it, but it cannot go into the glory. But the spirit has a new life which the body has not yet received. Did being in Christ Jesus bring only that result, that it was the spirit that was made alive and the body to be left dead? Let us see what the next verse says.

Ver. 11. "But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you." That being the fact, you will remember that that "if" here means a strong affirmation. "He that raised up Christ Jesus shall also quicken your mortal bodies." Your spirit is quickened, the spirit of life dwelling in you. Now, then, you shall have the body quickened also. This matter involved both spirit and body. But I am in a very peculiar position now. I have a new spirit but the old body, but the old body is to be put away as it belongs among the dead, and the new body will be just as distinct from the old one as the new spirit is distinct from the old spirit. God speaks of it later as being a spiritual body. It is the Holy Spirit dwelling in us that will do this. This being clear we are prepared for ver. 12, which closes up the entire answer in regard to that question which was asked in chapter vi., "Does not all this principle of grace abounding when sin abounded allow a man to sin?" He has demonstrated it in many ways, and now he says, "We are debtors not to the flesh." The flesh will do nothing but sin, but I am no longer a debtor to it. Before I was just as much debtor to it as I was to my stomach and lungs, which have to be supplied with food and air, and as a man in the flesh (that was a child of Adam, under condemnation; a sinner) everything within me sinned. I was naturally in every act a debtor to it and had to do what it wanted. Thank God that period is past and I am no longer a debtor to the flesh.

Now do you ask the question, "Shall I sin?" Why the man that did the sinning and the thing that dominated the sinning is put in the place of death. You will find the answer then is fourfold. It began with chapter vi. and comes down to this verse 13 in chapter viii. A new man does not sin. He has made a man of whom it can be said, "The righteous requirement of the law is fulfilled." You are a debtor not to the flesh. A little more is now added. "For if we live after the flesh, we are about to die." Of course we are. That is the great principle; I was condemned to death. But if we are through the Spirit, walking in the Spirit, led by the Spirit, treating as dead (that is the word "mortifying" used here), the flesh, then we are living. That is really living. It does not mean merely having life for the moment, but to live—keep on living. A man is living before God who is walking in the Spirit, mortifying the body. Therefore a man is living right along who is living by faith—"The just shall live (keep on living) by faith." Faith is that which takes hold upon the invisible things we have been talking about, that the Holy Spirit has brought, and that He takes delight in bringing out more and more. What a confidence I may have there that I shall be held to a righteous life through the Spirit. I have the great Helper and Instigator, the Holy Spirit Himself dwelling in me, that is never on the side of the flesh but always on the side of the spirit. We will see this wonderful salvation more as we go on.

Verse 14. We begin a new section here. "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." It is absolute relationship. Before I had got as far as having life and the Holy Spirit; now He gives me the knowledge of relationship. The first section then of this chapter viii. is the fact

of having the life of Christ Jesus ; the second section, beginning with the 13-14 verses, is that having this life I have the Holy Spirit to be the power of living and manifesting the life, and that goes down to verse 31 ; then the third section begins with verse 31, and goes on through to the end of the chapter.

What have we then ? First we have the life—and it might satisfy a great many simply to have this, but it does not satisfy God, because He has done a great deal more. As a new man I die and consequently need the spirit of the new man. The power to have this is the Holy Spirit that is given to me. There is a very sweet thought here, that we are going to enter into a very tender relationship, actually children of God. We never got such a thought in the Old Testament. We find a people, a covenant, servants but no children. Now we have an actual relationship, and what is there that the father will not do for his child ? He has him on his heart all the time.

We here learn what the Spirit does ; how much we have needed as new born men the Spirit which was in Christ, and why we need Him. It is interesting at the start here, that he is not talking about citizenship, nor being simply a new man, much less being a reformed man, but at once of the most tender and exquisite relationship—the son-place. Truly of all places that I would need the Holy Spirit that would be the one, that I might know how to behave myself as a son. This goes on quite to the end of the section, to the 32d verse.

We have a whole book written about Christ as the Son of God ; one of the most marvelous books, the gospel according to John. We find Him there the Life-giver, always doing that which pleased the Father, always able to say “Father and I,” always

showing out just what the Father would show out if He were here. And then another book is written to tell us who believe on the Son of God that we have eternal life and that we are sons of God. A wonderful thing this! It is not enough to be born a son of God, but I must have in me the Spirit of God. Because we are the sons of God He has sent forth the Spirit of His Son; not of *a* son but of *His* Son, to dwell in us. We have not received the spirit of bondage again, so the first thought is that He is the spirit of liberty. Why certainly being justified by faith we have peace and therefore the most perfect liberty in His presence. God's perfect love dealing with us has cast out all fear. Fear has torment and God cannot allow His sons to have a particle of that.

Not only that but we have the confidence and gladness of sons. So he says we have received the spirit of the son-place, whereby we cry Abba, Father. This should read "Abba" on the part of the Hebrew, and Father on the part of the English for instance, and Vater for the Germans, and so on. It is the sweet thought that God puts Himself in the place most familiar and endearing to each. You see "Vater" or "Abba" would not mean nearly as much to us as the word "Father." It is to give each one in his own tongue the tenderest word there can be to him for God.

Ver. 16. We have received this spirit then. Now mark this—this bears witness (or rather testimony, for there are three words in the English to one in the Greek, and this same word "witness" has destroyed more peace of souls perhaps than anything else. If they had used the word "testimony" how much simpler it would have been,) that we are the children of God. In 1 John v. you find the three words translating the one in the Greek; witness, record and testi-

mony. There never was a man in the world knew he was saved by the witness of the spirit. If he does not know it because God said so, millions of witnesses do not amount to anything. I know that Christ died, not by the witness within me, but because God said so. This feeling within me will not tell me. People have got the thought that they have got something in them. I remember a man who came to this meeting years ago. When I asked him if he was saved, he answered, "O, yes, I know I am saved. I got an experience forty years ago, and got the witness of the spirit at that time." Well, it was not worth anything. The man was a rascal as I afterwards learned. His lips were stained with tobacco juice, and I thought at the time it was a strange place for the Holy Spirit to dwell in.

The Holy Spirit dwelling in me becomes the dominating feature then. He acts and thinks for me, and just as we respond to one another in certain relationships, brother to brother, or child to father, so the spirit makes us respond to the very things God tells us we are. The Holy Spirit dwelling in me makes my heart and mind take hold of these things—I respond in heart to them. I call Him "Father," I do not use the word "feeling," which is not used in scripture. The Holy Spirit dwelling in me, a son of God, makes me act towards God as a son, and with all the filial openness and confidence of a son. You will understand it in speaking of the family. There is the father with half a dozen children all around him, speaking or listening to him, and you can see at a glance how much at home these children are. But I notice that man has another child; he is not there. What is the matter with him? He has gone to bed punished. The father could not let him be in his presence. He could not climb over his

father's back and play with him as the others. What is the trouble? Is he not a son? Yes, just as much so as the rest, but there is a cloud come between him and his father, which though it has not broken up the sonship at all has broken up the fellowship of that place for the time. Now the Spirit tells us we are sons, but He is needed in us to make us act in all the wealth that we have in the son-place, and that is what it means.

The Holy Spirit is there to testify within me, and while He testifies to me that He loves me, I testify back to Him that I rejoice in it. I simply give back testimony to God. I do it also in my conduct. I cannot express the whole matter better than to say it gives the "at home" feeling. I pity the believer who, though all the riches of Christ are his, does not enjoy them.

You will understand, of course, that the Holy Spirit can never leave you. It is simply impossible. The Spirit Himself thus bears testimony with our spirits. Mark the difference between bearing to and bearing with. It is bearing *with*. I have fellowship *with* God in regard to this son-place. Bearing witness *with* our spirit that we are the children of God. More than that. It is also true (verse 16) that if I am a son, I am an heir of God, and I wonder that the people who talk about the witness of the spirit do not talk about being heirs of God. I have never heard them allude to this once, that the Holy Spirit dwells in me and makes me act like an heir. Now what is it? Am I an heir of all that is going on in the world to-day? No, I am out of it all. I am an heir of what is coming. An heir has to wait for his inheritance; I am not an heir of the thing I possess, I am an heir of that which is to come. After it comes I am no longer an heir but a possessor. We are heirs

to all the glory of the kingdom that Christ will set up, and all that is to come in the new heavens and the new earth. It does not say heirs of earth or heaven even, but heirs of God. It must be the new thing—the redeemed thing. What then is my position? I am not in the possession of that to which I belong, hence I must wait for it. That makes me negative the things that are going on now. I ought to do this. What makes me do it? The Holy Spirit. Experience is simply making true to one's heart what are God's own facts.

Heirship occupies a good many verses here; first the statement "heirs of God," then more than that, "joint-heirs with Jesus Christ; if so be that we are sufferers with Him that we may be glorified together also." Now that "also" lets us know that there are two things in connection with the heirship. I do not know any better illustration than what happened in this city some years ago. When Com. Vanderbilt's will was read, it was found all his children were heirs, but it also occurred that while they each received a million, for instance, there was one son who had gone on for years with his father, having fellowship with him, that was heir to fifty or more. There was a back account of heirship in that beyond the common heirship. It was the result of certain things. He earned it in his father's estimation. Now, then, we are heirs of God, but there is one Son of God that has got a great deal more than the rest, and if I travel along with Him, ignoring things down here, as He says in John xii., "If any man will serve me, let him follow me," following and suffering with Him, I get into the heirship of His kind. We are co-heirs with Christ. He is bringing many sons unto the glory, but those who suffer with Him will take the place of having the greater inheritance. I

wonder if you would not understand it in regard to Paul, when in 2 Tim. iv. 9, “I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith.” That does not mean he had kept on believing, it was the truth that was given to him to hold and carry through. What then? “Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness which the Lord, the Righteous Judge, shall give me in that day.” Do you not think he was a co-heir with Christ, having suffered with Him? Take what he tells you in chapter iii., “Thou hast known my doctrine, my manner of life.” Why how he threw off everything in counting all gain but loss compared with the Lord’s things, being poor yet making many rich—was he a worldly character? As having nothing yet possessing all things—was not there an heirship a little beyond simply being an heir? Why he was suffering with Christ, for he says, “Always bearing about in my body the scars of the Lord Jesus.” Suppose I am not walking at all in reference to His coming; then I have lost the motive, and though I am an heir, I shall not be a co-heir in the thing which is mentioned here. It is not saying that others are not heirs. You understand now the distinctive characters of the two kinds of heirship. That is simply the announcement to show you that the very man that wrote this was entering into it; he says, “I reckon that the sufferings of the present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory,” and that shows that the spirit with which I rejoice about the heirship is far above the sufferings here. A child may remember how much he has transgressed against his father after he repents, but his father does not; it is all swallowed up in the joy of the prodigal’s return. Are we suffering for Christ’s sake or our own sake, because we have been guilty?

There is a vast difference between the two. We can see that everything is going to ruin fast; the more we get from the word the more we see that. Someone has got to come and take sin and set up a kingdom of righteousness and truth, for man had spoiled everything, and religious man worst of all, therefore the Lord must come.

Now, then, just as before the day of Christ, everyone was looking for someone to come, so it is to-day—between this moment and that manifestation everything here is showing that it is needing Christ. Now couple this with what we have in 1 John iii. We are sons of God to-day, and it is not yet manifest what we shall be, "we shall be like Him as He is," etc., and "every man that hath this hope on Him, purifieth himself as He is pure." It is like saying, "That is the thing I am expecting, and I won't have these things." The more the glory looms before me the more I cast off these things. The whole creation will never get its rights until the sons of God are manifested with the Son of God.

If anyone of you went home to-night and learned that you had fallen heir to a fortune of \$60,000,000 in Germany, I think that the little you own now would not be of much account, and the few business matters you have now to attend to would be put in the background. If your heart was on your real possessions you could think and talk about nothing else but the coming of the Lord and the glory.

How perfect a unity the scripture is! Romans is here associating itself with Col. iii., because it is the same spirit that writes it. The redemption of the body is all that we are waiting for. I am quite sure that the Holy Spirit dwelling in us and keeping that before us will make us let go of many things here.

Ver. 24. "For we are saved in the hope." It is

"we are" saved ; what a perfect unity in all Paul's epistles. In Ephesians the three things that he prays for in regard to the believer are, that we might know what is the hope of God's calling, then what is the riches of His inheritance, and last what is the power by which he wrought in bringing us in there. But you notice the first thing is, what is the hope of the calling. In Philippians the calling is "on high," in Hebrews it is "a holy calling," this involving then the thought of the hope ; but we are already saved, so that hope never looks to the matter of salvation of the soul. How sad Christians are generally ; the fact is they are hoping to be saved because they are not told that they are saved *in the hope*. You see the utter impossibility of saying "I am saved *by* hope." Hope cannot save me ; Christ's work saved me, grace has saved me, I am told that I am saved by "grace through faith." Faith then saves me, but I am hoping for that for which I am called, and so he says the hope that is seen is not hope. What a man sees how can he hope for ? But if I am hoping for what I do not see, I wait patiently for what is coming.

We were speaking above of sonship and the Holy Spirit dwelling in us making us act like heirs, and what is the action ? Why we see everything here going to ruin, and we give the lie to everything that says things are getting better here. We do not have to look any further in the word for this. We do not have to judge by our own eyesight. And not only that, but we ourselves "groan within ourselves" waiting for that manifestation ; and that is the thing we are hoping for. Then while hoping for it the Holy Spirit in us brings out the proper response, and reaching toward it we patiently wait for it. But in doing that we let go of things down here. The sim-

ple fact of being sons and heirs is enough to make us at home and to act in these relationships, and for this He is given us.

Ver. 26. Here we come to another use of the Holy Spirit in us, and it is immediately connected with what we have had only it is an additional thought. "Moreover the Holy Spirit helps our infirmity." The old version read "our infirmities," and that was very imperfect as the Holy Spirit does not help our infirmities but our infirmity. What under the old reading was obscured now becomes quite clear. What is our infirmity? Why, I am here and I belong somewhere else. I am belonging amid all that scene of glory which is going to be manifested with Christ. The moment I am saved I am unfitted for anything else. And now to keep us in the unfitness practically, the Holy Spirit is dwelling in us. But we are not there and we ought to have intercourse with Him who is there. And we need in that intercourse to be kept up to the elevation and tone of it. How will that be? Our infirmity is that we are down here where everything is under the devil, and we might be decoyed into saying it is our business to make everything down here better, as the church has been trying to do, to push forward mankind, and all the rest of the pretty things man says. That is man's idea, but there is not a particle of truth in it, of course, according to God's thought. Men talk about leaving footprints on the sands of time; the only footprints I am likely to leave are very erring ones, and the only ones I should ever touch were made long ago by One who is now in the glory.

Christ was the most dependent being that was ever on this earth. Why? Because He belonged up there. His prayers show that. In the whole history of Israel you will find very little arrangement about pray-

ing, because they were down here on the earth and God was dwelling here also ; but you and I belong somewhere else, and therefore we are entirely, moment by moment, dependent, and praying is the language of that dependence. But shall I pray according to my own ideas of that dependence ? No. The Holy Spirit is given me. He is the Spirit of Truth, and He is the Spirit which responds to the thing which has been done for me. So He will not give me the prayer of the “old man” or the Jew, because I am in Christ Jesus, not of a man of the world, because I am a man of heaven. That is the infirmity ; that I am here when I belong up there. It is one infirmity, not infirmities. Understand that it does not mean and does not say that we do not know how to pray when the Holy Spirit prays in us, but that being a son of God does not make me know how to pray ; “He makes intercession for us,” etc. I should utter a very little one ; He utters it in the full expanse of it ; it is known in its value in full. Is it received and understood ? “He that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the spirit.” He is searching my heart and knows the mind of the spirit that is in me, and we find that He is just there to stand for all I have in God. He is making intercession according to God’s mind, and that is the kind of thing that goes up to God ; then the prayer before God is that.

The next verse says that God had a purpose, explaining that it means that He maketh intercession according to the mind of God. While I am here I am to be just as much in fellowship with the things up there as I will be when I get there. Now what is this purpose ? Before that is given the next verse comes in with a further statement—“And we know that to them that love God all things work together

for good." What does that come in for? Why was not that put in some other place? Well, what were we talking about? Praying. "O Lord, stop this rain," "O Lord, get me a pair of shoes," "O Lord, don't let that man get my money," etc. Just stop and think a moment how often it comes to this in prayer meetings. "Bless me and my wife, my son John and his wife, Amen." We rise above all this by saying, "all things work together for good." By the way, there are a good many things the believer is said to know in this book; the believer is a pretty knowing person, not of himself, of course, because he just listens to the One who tells him everything. That verse therefore is put right in in connection with that matter of praying, meaning there are some things you do not have to pray for because you know all about them. People go to their pastor and say, "Won't you pray for me in these circumstances?" To all such cases I should say, "These things are all just right—'It came to pass that Jehovah did test Abraham'—and suppose Abraham came to me and said, 'O pray that I shall not have to kill Isaac.' I would have to say, 'Do you not know that God is the Almighty God and can raise up Isaac a thousand times if need be?' These are not matters to pray about; not that you could not put everything into God's lap and tell Him about them, but He is so interested in them that He has already told you about them. That is what this verse is put in here for, to let me know that when I was saved I was not left alone, but someone was given to come along with me and help me all the time.

Now the next two verses tell us of that design God had. We go back now into God's thoughts, and I always find such a wonderful wealth in getting back into His purposes; He never took angels back into

these things, and He made known His *ways* unto Moses but that was all, and to Israel He made known His *acts*—but for us He goes back to Himself, what He was thinking about and His counsel. “For whom He foreknew He predetermined for a purpose.” This is that which dominates this whole portion of the chapter, that they should be conformed to the image of His Son ; not that they should be simply sons, but sons of God according to the style of sonship of the One that was down here and is now up there declared to be the Son of God. That is the kind you and I are. God is never going to fill my heart with things other than that ; no praying as if I lived in the cellar always crawling on all fours on the earth, but just waiting for that to which I belong, the son-place manifested. We would not have had this spoken of if we had not had a little time to wait. We were predestined then to be conformed to the image of His Son —why we could spend a day thinking of this, that is the only rank and style for us. I think it must make us walk along in this world a little differently to think of this. The devil can come in as he pleases but we go along with head up because we are to be conformed to the image of His Son. Directly it will be, for we are only waiting for the manifestation. Like a little chicken in the egg, it was all well enough to be there, but that was not what it was created for, it was to live outside and have wings and go about. So it is with us. We are living here, but we are only shaping wings to fly, so to speak. We ought to be on the wing all the time. In order to get us there what has He done ? “Whom He predestinated He also called,” that is He had a purpose to save them and has gone to work to do it Himself. The first thing was to call us, but He could not begin this work till He had the Son as a pattern, so Christ is raised up and declared

to be the Son of God. Now He begins to call ; next He justifies and makes them new—"To them that are in Christ Jesus there is no condemnation ;" and the next thing is to glorify, and that is the full display—manifested in the glory with Him. Our salvation always includes those three things. In 1 Cor. i. 30, speaking of Christ, "He is made unto us the wisdom of God." Righteousness (same as justification), sanctification (that is separation unto Him), and redemption ; what a wonderful salvation it is ! That closes up the matter. Have we not had a marvelous display of things, chapter after chapter, just deepening the character of its truth, meeting the conscience and the heart, all questions taken up thoroughly and looked at clearly, everything answered ; and now we come out and say what was not said in the beginning as far as anything like a statement of the matter is concerned, and it might just as well have been put in the opening chapter to show that God had a purpose in all this, but as I have said before Romans does not begin so much with God as it does with man, working upward and telling more and more till we get to the grand things of God. Ephesians starts the other way—from God. There are some chapters we simply turn upside down and read them backwards, notably 2 Cor. v. The end of that chapter comes to me and my want as a sinner, and the beginning looks at my being risen in body and glorified. Hebrews is the same way ; it gets us into the presence of God first and then goes down to meet the need. We start this chapter by saying, "There is no condemnation in Christ Jesus." The mind of the Spirit we have instead of the mind of the flesh. We learned that it was so distinctly characteristic of us as sons of God that it was impossible not to have the Holy Spirit. Then we began to look at His work.

As a son we get the joy in the filial relationship and then we learn that we are heirs ; there is no backing out from all the blessings here. When God took up this matter He took it up from the beginning to the end. It is a marvelous thing that sonship is our place and title ; may we more and more enter into it and the joy of it.

Ver. 31. As we have had so many questions from this book that seemed to come from an opposer, so now we have questions on the other side—of triumph and of challenge ; after repeating all the wonderful things that we have had from the 18th verse of chapter i., on entering into the whole matter of what God has done in Christ Jesus for us, both in regard to sins and to our nature, bringing us in before God forgiven, made a new creation, sons of God, heirs of God, then the Holy Spirit dwelling in us to make this all true to us—and all this according to God's purpose in the beginning that we should be conformed to the image of His Son. These are the mercies of God. This is His way of salvation, His great salvation.

Now all these questions that have been proposed at different periods through the book have been answered. What then have you to say ? That is the thought. In chapter iii. we had it that all were declared guilty ; the law was brought in that it might show to everyone that all were guilty, that every mouth might be stopped before God as to any excuse. Now there is a triumphant stopping of every mouth as to every demand. Is there anything further you can ask for ? “What shall we say now ?” I never heard anyone ask God such questions as are asked in this book of Romans. He has met us entirely beyond anything we could ask Him ; beyond all imagination and reach. As we have it in Ephesians iii., “To

Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly, above all that ye ask or think." That is the character of Christ's work, of God's work, too.

Thus it begins "If God be for us." Have you not enlarged in the thought of God as we have gone along? It would seem as though in the beginning of the first chapter when it was said, "The wrath of God is revealed against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of man," as though God was against us. Certainly He was against the unrighteousness and sin, the nature and the conduct; surely He was that. He could not allow sin, the nature or conduct either, but now that He has entered into the scene and met it all according to His own power and grace and we come forth sons of God, what shall we say to these things? If God be *for* us who *can* be against us? It is a question from the other side now, from the side that in the earlier part of the book has been answering the questions. All that God is as light is for us. Before He was for us as against our sins and ourselves; now He is for us as against all adversaries that can rise up—Satan and the world and any opposition that can be named. It reminds one of that wondrous Ps. xxxii., to which reference has been made on other occasions. It begins, "Blessed is the man whose sin is covered, whose transgressions are forgiven; blessed is the man to whom Jehovah does not impute iniquity." Then it goes on to tell "While I was in sin His hand was heavy upon me," and "I said I will confess my sins." That is all, simply confession. And what follows? "Thou forgavest the iniquity of my sins." After that the next section of the Psalm is "Thou art my hiding place." The soul that has all that forgiveness and has had all that sin covered turns right around to Him and says that. What did He mean? Why Thou art my refuge

against everything that rises up against me in any way. Thus the argument goes on very triumphantly here. And it is an argument that you and I ought to have more and more ; the Holy Spirit here gives it to us. Can there be any trouble of conscience in regard to sins with this, “He that spared not His own Son but freely gave Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him freely give us all things ?” I have had all that has been done by Christ for me to free me from condemnation, to bring me in as a son of God before Him in the place of confidence, of His own son according to the character of Christ Himself in His Sonship as a man. I want to know through the whole course of life here that He is for me ; so that verse is given. “How shall He not *with Him* freely give us *all things*.” So the question answers itself in the most triumphant way. It takes us back again to chapter v., which is in some respects the very heart of this Epistle. There it says, “We rejoice in tribulation also, knowing what it means,” and then, “If when we were enemies we were reconciled unto God, how much more being reconciled shall we be saved by His life.” That is of the same character as what we have in the verses before us.

Ver. 33. Here is another question. This one is with reference to condemnation. We have been told that there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus. Then is there any power anywhere, is there any enemy anywhere that can lay anything to the charge of God’s elect ? Why does He use the word elect here ? It is used nowhere else. It is because you have had in the verse above “All things work together for good to those that He has called.” That is a distinctive name. It is the same as called out. In other words, is there an atom of imperfection in this character ? Can there a single spot be

found on them? It is as though to challenge everyone. Then the answer is, "It is God that justifies." Is there anybody back of Him, anybody that can detect a spot or fleck or stain that He has not foreseen and met? Is it worth while, then, to attempt to justify ourselves? Is it worth while for man to try and build himself up as though he could meet God's demand that way, when God has already come down to us as sinners and justified us, made us clear before Him?

Then still further, "Who is He that condemneth?" God does not; who can then? Can the law condemn a man? "Through the law he has become dead to the law." We are crucified that the body of sin might be destroyed. Can Satan say anything against us? Satan can lead God's children into mischief and become an accuser of them, but Christ died and that settles the whole matter. If there is Satan's accusation on the one side, there is Christ's death on the other.

Christ does not intercede for sinners up there; it is for the saints. His plea for the sinner was on the cross. We have then five fundamental facts, and do you not see that every one of these things that have been stated now to meet the matter of sin and condemnation was from outside? He does not even say you believe or are walking right; no, it says, "God justifies, Christ died, Christ is risen, Christ is at the right hand of God," and then "He also intercedeth for us." Five things stated and not one of them what you or I do. So the same grace that saved us will keep us, will bring Christ for us, will take us up to the glory, will crown us with Him, will manifest us with Him. No, we have had man's doings very clearly in Romans, and with what result? Guilty, godless, evil, and without strength! What a contrast one with the other.

Ver. 35. Now we come to a few things about our journey through this scene. This next question has not to do with condemnation, but with our walk here. It is called tribulation in the earlier part of the book, and after telling what they are he says, "Who shall separate us from the love of God?" What do we encounter in this wilderness journey? Seven things are named, every one of them connected with being down here. Do you suppose I would get persecution if I were a child of the devil? Why, he has control of the whole world! I am of God, passing through this place as Israel passed through the wilderness, and you will remember that they found nothing there at all, not even anything to eat, but just lived on what God sent them from above. It was a perilous scene and barren, and they had trials on all sides and among themselves. You can see that they were in many senses in peril.

In Num. xiv., in view of all that was before them, Caleb says, "If Jehovah delight in us He will bring us in." That is of the character that we have here. Why, where are you when you come into Romans viii.? A risen man. It is like Israel after they had passed over the Jordan and standing looking back could say, "We are more than conquerors," for we have left all the hunger and hindrances on the other side. They might have been conquerors if they had not passed over Jordan, but having crossed over they were more than that.

We have learned what the mercies of God are now, hence the vitality of the question, "If God be for us who can be against us?" Down here none; up yonder, no matter if there are, the love of the Lord Jesus is above it all. No separation is the grand thought for all of us. It is not enough to say, no condemnation, when we look into the face of Christ,

but no separation, which makes it much richer and sweeter.

I call your attention to one more word, "Shall be able to separate us." We shall have in chapter ix. to look at that matter of power; you have had the love of God shown in what He has done and in some respects the wisdom of God brought out, but now the power of God is an additional element to keep us there, and it is involved in this, "None of these things shall be able to separate us." As in John x. Christ says, "I give unto them eternal life, and none shall pluck them out of my hand. My Father who gave them to me is greater than all and none shall be able to pluck them out of His hands." The simple fact is that they shall not be able to do it because when you bring in God you bring in the thought of power. I am to meet these principalities and powers, too, but I am persuaded that there is nothing that will be able to separate me from the power of His love. That is the thought. There is everything answered.

O perfect work of the perfect Christ, and the perfect love that casts out fear and brings us in in perfect confidence everywhere!

CHAPTER IX.

Understanding that the great subject of this epistle is God's righteousness in justifying the sinner you will see the pertinency of these chapters, ix., x., and xi. this section, to that subject. We have seen it declared fully that God is righteous in taking up the sinner apart from the law, and making him righteous without works. That, we have learned, is consistent with the Old Testament, both with the law and the prophets. If we find in chapter iii. that now the righteousness of God is witnessed by the law and the prophets, this opens up a new question altogether. What about the people that were found in the law and the prophets? Why you will see at once that if the same righteousness is not shown in dealing with Israel as has been brought out in the cross there would not be much dependence to be placed on our salvation. God says most assuredly that He is going to restore Israel. It is most sure that He scattered them and that He is going to take them up. Will this same grand principle of righteousness that we have had in the early chapters be manifested as clearly in all His future dealings with His earthly people Israel? If we find it so, you see how thoroughly this whole matter of righteousness in saving us is confirmed. If the question is asked, "Is He the God of the Jews only?" and I can reverse the question and say, "Is He the God of the Church only?" and find that He is the same God here as He is there, all holiness and grace and righteousness, have we not been rich gainers by that? So this section is a needed one, not brought in in the other books such as Ephesians, Colossians, Thessalonians and Philippians, which were not on the topic of the righteousness of God; but here it must come in.

So it begins (and I find one of the sweetest things is that God always takes care that we shall not get a cold sense of righteousness. You see a judge on his seat and you always get a sense of coolness ; he must keep cool in fact in order to decide justly, but God takes good care that we get no such impression of Him,) "I have great heaviness and sorrow of heart." Take chapter x., "My heart's desire and prayer for Israel," showing that we are introduced into the matter by the heart. Shall that heart get its answer ? If I have great heaviness and continual sorrow of heart for these brethren according to the flesh, shall I find that that is answered righteously ? If in chap. x. my heart's desire is that Israel shall be saved, shall I find that that is the thing that God is going to do ? I have so many times called your attention to the phrasing and the structure of the scriptures that this is very delightful to me here.

There is something very solemn about this appeal to God in regard to the truth of what is now to come out. "I have great sorrow and continual heaviness of heart." The Holy Spirit is using this man to say that. If he is giving us the mind of the Spirit all the way through this Epistle, he is giving it to us in this way and in these words. It is making him tell out the longing of the Holy Spirit Himself for Israel, not Paul feeling it simply, though doubtless he did, but God puts the feeling there. We love because He first loved us. We have had in chapter v. the love of God as shed abroad in the heart. We will have in chapter xiii., "All the law is contained in the one word, Love."

And now there comes a parenthesis, and I would suggest this reading which I have found to be perfectly grammatical and as nearly right as the one that is here in that respect. The form of the verb

allows “I did wish” or “I was wishing,” as well as “I could wish.” It is the imperfect tense, continuous action, “I was wishing.” But “myself” is in the nominative case. “I myself was wishing to be accursed.” I am sure that everyone sees that that is perfectly perspicuous. At the crucifixion of Christ they said, “His blood be upon ourselves and our children.” Was not that calling down a curse upon them? God put it down to ignorance as if He would not have it that way. In Acts iii. Peter says, “I know that through ignorance ye did it, but repent and your sins shall be blotted out.” In Acts iv. the Sanhedrim rejects it all as representative of all Israel, and afterwards in speaking of Stephen they say, “He intends to bring the blood of this man upon us.” Precisely; that is just what he did. The very next thing you find is that a man steps forward from that same Sanhedrim and receives authority to put down every bit of truth about Christ risen and to imprison and perhaps slay every believer, and he tells you that he did persecute them. I want to know if he himself is not the very impersonation of the hatred of Israel? Does not that give meaning to this, “I was wishing to be accursed of Christ?” He took it more than any Israelite living; he took it in behalf of the nation. God’s grace met that man on the way to Damascus and made a new man of him. Now, knowing the infinite mercy of God and redeemed from the curse, he knows what that curse means, so he says, “I have great sorrow and continual heaviness of heart,” for he was there himself and knew all about it.

There is another way in which this may be read, but it does not alter what I have said; it is this, “I have great heaviness of heart and continual sorrow, for I myself was wishing to be accursed of Christ

for my brethren." The reading is just as correct, but the difference is this, that the sorrow is for his brethren, putting the others in as a parenthetical clause, and in this you read, "I was wishing to be accursed from Christ for their sake," reading right along. Now, to read it as it has been read in the old version is simply to read an impossibility. No man that knows the Lord Jesus would ever dare to say, "I could wish myself accursed from Christ." What good was it to do? Did he love them more than Christ did? Christ was made a curse for them; was he going to do more than Christ did? It reaches up toward blasphemy almost. And yet we have been juggled 300 years with just that sort of thing.

I cannot understand why they ever put it "I could wish myself," because "myself" is in the nominative case, "I myself was wishing."

In the second verse he calls his conscience to witness. Now I think you will find the reason his conscience is called to the bar to witness is because of this former condition he was in. He was a persecutor and therefore he was wishing to be accursed, and so his conscience bears him witness in regard to it.

Now, leaving that, we go to look at these seven things that distinguish Israel. It is one of the most pitiful wrecks that was ever known in the universe. Take chapter iii. and see what advantages they had, and then this chapter. There is not a particle of history in the world that is worth anything that does not link itself with that people. They are the only nation that God ever said He would make a blessing. And the church that struts out to take the place of Israel is simply foolish and out of place. First it had to leave its heavenly place and become earthly, and take the place of the Jew in trying to benefit the world, and take the Jews' law, the ten command-

ments. So I say that it is simply foolish in all that it does. When the Lord Himself shall come we shall act with Him and reign with Him over the earth. Israel must be in their place, in their land with their worship, so as to be able to say, "This is our God, we have waited for Him." Why the whole of the Old Testament scriptures are written in the interest of that one people. When the Most High (going back to the first thoughts of God) divided the portion of the earth, He did it with regard to the twelve tribes of Israel. The world is never going to be made better by the church. So there is no hope there, and no hope in Israel as long as He lets them do their own work. But if He takes them back through the cross and establishes them righteously there He can do it, but He has never proposed to do it in any other way, as the church is trying to do.

Now we turn to the peculiar privileges of Israel shown in verse 4. What revelation did He ever make to anybody else? See what it says in Ephesians ii. to us Gentiles, "At that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel." If we had been with Israel we would have had a Christ. "Having no hope;" there never was a hope held before the Gentile. "And without God;" they had plenty of gods but they did not have God. How did we get out of it? "But now in Christ Jesus," no other way. Any man that is not in Christ Jesus may cease his prattle about it, and this talk we have about taking up man and making him better is simply superb lying. It is taking the Jews' place. People are getting down to the Jews' place all the time. I believe that all people mean now when they talk about Christ's teaching is the sermon on the mount. And they call it Christianity, which it is not. It is good, rich and grand Judaism.

Adoption means here taken up as God's own people. They were the people taken instead of others—not the noblest people He could find on the earth (it sounds strange in the presence of God to say noble of man). I suppose Israel was about as miserable a people as you could find, and you never learn that they had anything to boast of. In Ezekiel they are compared to a poor little infant thrown out in its blood, and it said, "I cared for thee." It was not because they were the finest set of men, though I most assuredly recognize their power through all the history of mankind, intellectually, scientifically, and in all matters of art and learning everywhere. If they are not bound down and whipped to death they are foremost in everything. For they are God's people. Then His covenants were with them. You and I were strangers to covenants, "to them He gave the law." Then while all men were everywhere bowing down to idols these had the worship ; God actually among them accepting the blood daily. And then the promises when they failed, poor things that they were. God said certain things to the Gentiles, but never anything like promises.

It is dreadful to think how little is appreciated the fact of the righteousness and carefulness with which God will accomplish all that He said about them, as well as the grace.

The word of Jehovah having once gone forth can never be taken back, and we close this section with chapter xi. which says just that. It is the strangest thing that we are taught everywhere that Israel has ceased ; and therefore the church comes in to take up their place, their worship and their work, and that is the ruin of the church. It has no business with their law ; it is criminal to be under the ten commandments. We have no business to teach it. It is

criminal to take up their ritual, it is none of ours. It is criminal to take up the benefiting of the world when another people had it peculiarly theirs to do.

People will quote all the Old Testament as having to do with the church. Go and preach but do not take up the Old Testament promises. God is not fulfilling the promises of the Old Testament in any wise anywhere, but has gone to take out a people from among the Gentiles. It ought to be warrant enough that He is having His heart all told out now, that it is His will to save everybody that believes. One ought not to need the promise attached to it. That He wants me to preach should be enough without reference to results or promises. It is simply the fact that one is to go and tell it because he is telling out the yearning of God's heart towards sinners. But do not interfere with Israel's possessions. They belong to them alone, and God shows that by the fact that the land was never possessed. Nobody owns it or lives there that has any right to it. God is holding it as fallow land for them. It is theirs and nobody else's. It cannot be Christianized, it is to be inhabited by Israel restored, because the mouth of Jehovah has said it. I dwell upon this because it will make these chapters all the easier, and they are connected with these things in the fourth verse. Do not think therefore that it is the church or the believer of the present day ; we have had our share of this book in the first eight chapters—"No condemnation," "No separation from the love of God"--and a rich share it was. Now then let the Jew have his share. The covenants, the promises, the adoption, all belong to the Jew. Did Christ come out of the church ? No, but He was born out of Israel. See how simple every word of verse 4 is then with reference to Israel and nobody else. That will prepare us

for chapter xi. All through that chapter you will find that they are blessed and gathered back for the fathers' sakes. We are taken back to God's announcement, "I am the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob," and He pledged Himself beyond all precedent for earthly blessings to those three men. No man ever was crowned with a grander crown than Abraham had, and then Isaac became heir to it, and then Jacob. So "Whose are the fathers" cannot be said of the church.

To close up this account of the peculiar blessings that were proposed to Israel, He says, "and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all God blessed forever." It is giving Him His place then as God from the beginning, and then God coming down to carry out all these purposes, and just as Israel shall say in the latter day, "This is our God, we have waited for Him;" so we get the full character of their blessing, that it is associated with and pledged in One who is God Himself. What nonsense then for people to say that it is all over with Israel; why, it has scarcely begun. In this little interim of 1,800 years God has just been taking out a select portion of Gentiles for Himself. It had nothing to do with Israel. Before He began to do this Israel was scattered. Where were the ten tribes then?

I am not anticipating chapter xi. in this; it is only to give us the proper estimate of the great matter that God had in hand. One might say, "It is not accomplished," therefore He says, "Not as though the word of God were of none effect." God has not written all that to deny the thought.

"All Israel which are of Israel." He has an Israel in the last chapter of Galatians, where, after pronouncing blessings upon the children of God, He says, "All the Israel of God." That does not mean

the church or the believers of this day ; it means just what it says, and it is very appropriate that it should come in in Galatians. Why ? Because the church is rebuked there for accepting the thought that they must be circumcised and thus become Israelites. And it shows us that we have no business to become Jews in one single particular. In Rev. ii. and iii., where surely the church is before us, and he is speaking of all the evils that occur through the whole history of the church on the earth, you will find His jealousy there connected with the Jew. He speaks of certain ones in the church that say they are Jews and are not. That means they have made Jews of themselves by taking the law and the ritual, but it does not make them Jews, and God holds them apart (the Jews). He has a place for the Israelite and a blessing.

“ Because they are Abraham’s seed they are not all children.” That is a new fact brought in and it is with reference to the distinction between Ishmael and Isaac. It is for the sake of distinguishing a portion instead of the whole. We shall find it carried out by and by in the thought of the “ remnant.” In chapter xi. we get in this form, “ God has not cast away His people whom He foreknew.” Then, “ In Isaac shall thy seed be called.” And here all that pertains to Isaac comes in in a very precious way.

We remember that Isaac was the son born by the definite power of God. Ishmael was the son born of natural generation. In Isaac’s case He put forth the abundance of His own power. It was God’s power in resurrection—the dead womb producing Isaac. The Isaac son-ship was definitely to be the one promised, and the one that God’s thought was to be put in was to be joyous, and the very name means laughter. Abraham laughed, and Sarah laughed. “ In

Isaac shall thy seed be called," as definitely of God and not of man. See how that settles everything as of God.

Ver. 8. Here He explains it still further. We get the thought here that I have already expressed—the peculiar sovereignty of God in it because it was altogether of God. The idea of Sarah bringing Hagar to Abraham, as though she could help to carry out God's purposes. Man has never yet been called upon to help carry out any of God's purposes. We are the objects of the purposes not the instruments. So Sarah's Hagar amounted to nothing, and though Abraham accepted it, God did not accept that son as the one. He may bless him but He is not *the* seed. How peculiarly this sets forth God through it all! The same principle but in a certain new way of expression of God's sovereignty in the case of Rebecca. "Serve the younger." That is contrary to man, who makes the firstborn have the birthright and the chief place. But God is working according to His own thoughts and purposes, and not according to man's way, and brethren, we have learned in chapter viii. that we have need of the Holy Spirit in order to pray to God as He would have us. We would not one of us pray right if it were not for the Holy Spirit dwelling in us, which leads up the wonderful sense of confidence in and with God. He said the younger shall rule over the elder. It was not choosing according to moral qualities either, for it was before they were born. It was hating in the sense of setting one aside, and loving in the sense of using the other.

And then the old question comes in again. Unrighteous? Why, what is He doing? He is choosing a man through whom He shall pour out the immense volume of blessing to man. Is it unrighteous to be merciful to man, and to choose the channel

through which this blessing shall come? "By no means." Why? "I will have mercy upon whom I will have mercy," etc. You will notice that man's thoughts are generally something like this, "I will have mercy on this one and vengeance on that one," but it does not say that at all. It was a merciful thing to come to poor lost man. Well, then, let Him come His own way, for man does not deserve anything. All were lost and in idolatry, therefore He may choose whom He will through whom He will give.

Ver. 16. It is not of man or according to man's way at all. I am quite aware that this chapter has been so terribly spoiled that man has rarely found mercy in it. Theologians have been here and have left their sad traces as they do everywhere they go. It is solely that inasmuch as He is the One that shows the mercy, He will show that it will be pure mercy, unadulterated compassion.

Ver. 17. We get an additional thought here, that He is to show power in doing it and make His name known. And as He chooses between Esau and Jacob to show His compassion and mercy, He will choose Pharaoh now as the one by whom He will manifest His power—not Pharaoh's power, not Pharaoh helping Him, but His own power in spite of Pharaoh. Therefore did He harden Pharaoh's heart that He might all the more show out His power. Do you see anything unrighteous in that? What did He do it for? To punish him? No, that is not what it says, but that Pharaoh holding back more and more, God might show out His power in taking out His children, or rather people.

The moment Pharaoh hardened his heart, the punishments God had promised were due. Now look at it. God always, I believe, in the scriptures, before

executing judgments, has preliminary judgments that are hardening and preparing for it. First the offer, then the punishment adjudged, but before the punishment comes there is a hardening. In John xii. it says, "But for all that He had done these mighty works among them they would not believe, that the saying of Isaiah might be true of them, 'Who hath believed our report ?'" Pharaoh knew God—not this Pharaoh but his predecessors. All Egypt was confessing Jehovah in the time of Joseph, but now they were idolators. And so Pharaoh's saying, "Who is Jehovah ?" was the most thorough opposition to God, and there He smites him down, not to judge him for it but to harden him.

Another word. "For this cause have I raised them up." I have heard it said that God gives birth to this man to damn him, and to that one to save him. You do not get this anywhere in scripture. When it says "raised him up," does it mean "gave him birth ?" Then why does it not say so ? Because it does not mean it. The Pharaohs had a power that no kings ever had before or since. We read that in the time of Joseph the Egyptians sold their cattle to get wheat. They used up their wheat and then sold their land, and finally sold themselves, and so there was not a thing that did not belong to Pharaoh. There has never been such a thing before or since. Now, then, if Pharaoh moved it was all Egypt moved, so when he said they shall not go, all Egypt was against them. That was what it was to raise him up. God gave him special power that he might therefore be the one through whom God would show His power, and how easy He did show it. That is what it means and that is what it says.

Ver. 18. You will notice an additional thought here to what we had in verse 15. It is this, that He

will have mercy, and on whom He will, and thus far we have found that the hardening was for fitting the vessel so that He could show His mercy, or rather His power in mercy.

Then the objection in verse 19. Why does He still find fault? Who has resisted His will? That is, we are not taking the place of Pharaoh. He was hardened because He had resisted God's will. Who is there to find fault with now that we have not done it? This shows of course simply desire to oppose, and therefore the answer is, "Nay, but who art thou, O man?" That is usually the way men judge God, especially to-day. They are deciding that He cannot do this or that, and that He would not do the other, until they have a God of their own altogether, and if God acts otherwise on principles infinitely beyond their grasp they at once turn and cry as they do here. Why, the heart sets up a resistance to Him by the very questions they ask. It is an excuse. Many a question is but the refuge of a bad conscience that is trying to escape God, and the bad thing is that the sinner that is trying to escape God is trying to escape His mercy. See the very proper answer. Who are you that talk thus? "Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it," etc. There is doubtless a pertinency in that form of statement, "the thing formed." I suppose that you notice that this is at the bottom of nearly all the objections that are offered now conspicuously in regard to future punishment. To think that God would make people that would sin and then have to be damned. Here is the answer, "Shall the thing formed say to him who formed it?"

Every child of God knows that God can answer these questions, but there are times when man must be simply told that he has a will against God in what he asks. Again the answer is, "For has not the pot-

ter a right over the clay to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor?" But a person might say, Has God a right to make anybody in order to damn him? I do not find it in scripture. There are Israel and Pharaoh. It was grace to take Israel out, but it was just as much grace to go to Pharaoh and say, "Let my people go!" for He was giving Pharaoh an opportunity to have fellowship in that. Go back a little further. God chooses Isaac instead of Ishmael as the vessel of His mercy to the world. He simply casts Ishmael aside; it is not saying he is damned. Suppose a vessel the potter makes is not right; he casts it aside to use it for something else. In the case of Jacob and Esau, He uses them for different purposes, that is all. The mischief of all the readings of this chapter is (and I might say the trouble in many portions of scripture) the unsettled state of the souls of the readers in regard to the matter of salvation. A man that does not know he is saved reads the scriptures always with reference to getting saved, and there are a great many everywhere that are teaching that that is the great thing—to get my soul converted, to get safe to heaven, to be saved at last as the result of faithfulness in doing the things God tells me to do. Of course that is a denial of God's grace throughout. They are thinking of nothing but salvation on the one hand and damnation on the other, and so it is easy to make these mistakes. But you are only getting God's purposes as to how He will come to the whole human race. We must read the scriptures as they are given to us, and not attempt to put meanings to them.

Ver. 22. The great thought of what God is doing in saving is given here. Not simply the matter of saving your soul or mine, but what if God is willing to show wrath, upon whom will He show it but the

enemy, and if mercy, where but on the vessels He has made—His own? In this case He was willing to show His wrath upon Pharaoh in destroying him, but He was showing mercy to Israel whom He had fitted for that mercy. Now He is showing His wrath against Satan our great enemy, but we have nothing but His mercy. Pharaoh had become fitted for wrath by his willfulness, but on the other side when it speaks of vessels of mercy He says He had to fit them, they could not fit themselves as they could for wrath.

The illustration, however, of Israel is a very pertinent one here. When God went to Israel by Moses, He had to deal with him a long while getting ready and finally almost drove him to go to Egypt. When He got to Egypt then He had to go to the Israelites and plead with them to be willing to go, so besotted were they in their misery. Then after He had gotten Moses ready and Israel ready to be saved then He goes to Pharaoh and says, "Let my people go." Was not He doing everything? We had to be called and pleaded with, and Christ had to die, and we had to have the Holy Spirit given to make known these things, showing us our sin and our need, and then He had to do it all. We were fitted by Him.

Does not this chapter have a very different sound from what it is very often made to have? What is the result? God not only saving us but His sovereignty in it all. While we have learned up to chapter ix. of God's righteousness in justifying, we learn two additional things here—His sovereignty, acting alone from His own mind, and then putting forth His own power to do it, and you have a chapter worth remembering all your life. And that is the way all these terrible opposing questions are answered by

God. It has been a very sweet thing to follow these questions and answers all the way through.

Ver. 25. "I will call that my people which was not my people," quoting from Hosea. He had already paved the way for it. Did not the sovereignty of God have a right to go out to us Gentiles? Over 1,500 years God said of the Gentiles "not my people," and to the Jews, "You are my people;" but He gave to the Jews the fact that He was going to take up others. This was preparing, you see. You find then that this great matter of going outside of the Jewish fold to get a people was in the prophets, and there are types of it in Moses—in the wife that Joseph got in Egypt—in the way that God dealt with various Gentiles throughout the history of Israel. We find all the way through that God had a heart for them, and would go out to them occasionally when the time came for it.

Ver. 27. Isaiah x. 22–23 is letting us know that God is not going to take all Israel after all. It was a portion. That is the principle of the potter having power over his clay. Though all had the same law, covenant, promises, and the same God, here is a vessel that is become a vessel of dishonor, and here are others, the little remnant, that have become vessels of honor, and so Isaiah says, "Though the number be as the sand of the sea a remnant shall be saved." And from the very start God has gone on the principle of His own choosing.

Isaiah i. 9 had said, "Except Jehovah of Hosts had left us a seed (if He had not held on to a remnant) we had become as Sodom and made like unto Gomorrah." Of course we must notice the words, the phrasing of everything we have in God's word. In the one case it was "We had *become* as Sodom," and the other "*be made* like unto Gomorrah." One is a

natural result, the other is a judgment upon us. That is the end of that question.

Ver. 30. The Gentiles were to get it, you see. God had, if you will, been turning His back upon them all the years He had been with the Jews, but now they attained to a righteousness that the Jew failed to attain to. Now when we find the principle throughout the Old Testament of righteousness without works, who had that word spoken in their ears and afterwards had it written down for them, why did not they get it? It was as simple in the days of Moses and David as it is to-day. It was Moses who said that you did not have to go up into heaven or into the deeps to get this word, for I am offering it to you now. It was David who said, "Blessed is the man whose iniquity is not imputed." Why did they not take this place also? Because they did not take it in the ground of faith but sought it on the ground of works. The next chapter opens with that thought.

When God laid it down that it was all a free gift, you see what an impertinence works were. They are so to-day. Men are told to take the life of Christ and imitate it. Why do you suppose God would have ever brought Christ to the cross to die as a sinner if that had been possible to man? Now that the flood of light thus given to us not simply from Moses and the prophets, but Christ's death and the Apostles after Him and then Paul with the heavenly truth—all this wondrous gospel of the glory—and yet there is so little of the gospel given out! Every word of gospel that was offered to Israel by God from year to year was rejected, and they sought to get a righteousness by works, and men are told to-day to *do*, and there are not held before them such things as they can get for nothing,—entering into the holiest, in fellowship with the Father and with

the Son, membership of the body of Christ. Such elements as these are offered, given you for nothing, to be more blessed than Israel a thousand fold. Now I say that all that is offered to-day apart from the cross never looks toward one of those things, and yet while the grace is despised the death of Christ is accepted as a matter of fact by the people generally.

The Gentile got the place simply through faith, where the Jew sought to get it through works. What was the matter with Israel? The next verse tells us. They stumbled at that stumbling-stone, "Even as it is written, Behold I lay in Zion," etc. It is that. Of course this is Christ and the prophet looking forward to that when it says, "He is going to become a stone of stumbling!" Christ says, "Whosoever shall fall upon this stone shall be broken." The sinner that will take his place as a sinner before God is broken—that is, saved. The judgment that was enacted in the cross is that which brings the judgment on all who reject this—death for sin. Christ's death for your sin and mine. Death which every sinner must have meted out to him if he does not accept this.

"He that believeth on Him shall not be put to shame." Though the stone was a stone of stumbling, that person believing may be borne through everything. To-day that same Christ becomes our glory. Simply resting on Him we have eternal life—all the glory before us—we are sons of God.

Do you not see then two added things to what we have gone over in chapter viii.? And yet we have been talking about Israel all the time.

God's perfect righteousness in taking up Israel has been shown us here, and in chapter x. we will find His perfect righteousness in casting them aside as a vessel that the potter has found is unfit for his use. Then in chapter xi, we shall find His perfect right-

eousness in bringing them back in due time, under the covenant that He made with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

I find that the book is inexhaustible, look at it where you will. May we be able to value little by little, and take up as we go on, what is here.

CHAPTER X.

After the quotation from Isaiah regarding the stumbling-stone and saying that they did stumble at it, the heart's desire is still told out as we have it in this first verse. There is the full statement of their ruin, you see, stumbling at the stumbling stone, and all lost except those who now will believe, and hence the longing becomes the more earnest, and especially so in verse 2. "For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge." They were showing their zeal in regard to their care of the scriptures, the temple, the ritual, the very name of Jew and Israelite, and the profession with regard to God Himself as being their God against idolatry. Now there was a zeal for God, but it failed to take up what their scriptures contained—the great principle of righteousness without works and the need of this righteousness without works because we were sinners. These things were brought out in the Old Testament and they failed to apprehend the whole matter, for he says, "it was not according to knowledge," which ought to have been according to the revelation, for God had shown Himself as the One who saved for nothing. They were opposing it in all their lives, seeking to have righteousness by their works, so it was a zeal not according to knowledge, for the word was open before them. And I find to-day that a great deal of the reading of the Bible is as if it were telling people something to do, but it is not so. It is the revelation of what God is. The more we learn what He is the more we will be drawn to Him. It tells God's heart, His sending Christ, His raising Him from the dead, and then announcing salvation to everyone who simply believed, so you see it is a revelation of God Himself. But if

we took up the Bible simply to find what we must do, we would learn nothing at all. We learn there what Christ has already done, and then we may enter into peace. I am quite sure that if every child of God enjoyed that knowledge he would enjoy reading the scriptures, and not go at it as a solemn duty or take it up as a daily thing that he must do. No child away from home who gets his father's letters reads them that way if he is at all filial. If he loves his father he will spring for the letter and open it with eagerness. That is the way the Bible is to be read, and it will be when we learn that it is not to tell us our duty but about Christ and how He has met our case.

We ought to get to know God so that we know that the more sinful we are the more we are just the ones He is seeking. It is the opening out of the heart for us as the needy ones. That was the substance of the Old Testament really. This same Apostle says to Timothy, "From a child thou has known the scriptures." It was only necessary to have Christ reveal what was said in the Old Testament, you see. And therefore to find the Jew seeking to find a righteousness of his own to meet God was turning away completely from the whole matter of the word and God's mind. Ignorant and going about to establish their own righteousness they have not submitted themselves to the righteousness of God. What is the righteousness of God? Why Christ was the full measure of it, and wherein God was declaring His righteousness in the whole of their scriptures He was telling of Christ. God raised His Son into the glory with power to bring others up, and so He was the righteousness of God. It is the full consummation. If anybody talks about trying to obey God, I say, "There is Christ, believe in Him." If I want

to be a righteous man there is all I have to do. Just as a man might say to me to-day who had committed murder, "I want to be a good man." I should answer, "Very well, then, submit to the law and be hung." That is all he could do to be righteous. Christ is the end of the law for righteousness.

A contrast is made between that which they were under and that which is presented in Christ. From verses 5 to 10 Moses writes this way, that the man that doeth these things shall live thereby. Simple is it not? But where is your man that has done these things ever? We had in the opening of chapter viii. what the law could not do because it was weak in the flesh; but God has opened a way by which He can get righteous conduct, but it is by believing, not by doing these things under the law. The righteousness of the law said, "Do, and live;" but nobody ever did, and now the righteousness of the faith speaks otherwise, and Moses is called into the case now to testify on the subject, and you may turn now if you will to Deut. xix. 11-15; and then afterwards to Is. xlvi., but first I want to read this—the righteousness that is by faith says this, "Say not in thy heart 'Who shall ascend up into heaven,' that is to bring Christ down, 'or who shall descend into the deep,' that is to bring Christ up from the grave, but what says it?" "The word is nigh thee in thy very mouth, the word of faith which we preach." Deuteronomy is only telling what God had done for them for forty years, and now He was going to take them over simply because He had said He would. He says, "I have set before you life and good, death and evil," and so it is now. The righteousness of faith speaks in the same way, but by turning to Is. xlvi. and beginning at verse 8, you will find something similar—"Drop down ye heavens from above and let

the skies pour down righteousness, let the earth open and let them bring forth righteousness, I Jehovah have created it." Before that, looking upon the devastation wrought, Jehovah said, "I have created good and evil." That does not mean that He created sin, but evil ; and evil means the judgment of sin. He had looked for righteousness and there was none, and He had to punish. But He had to bring in a righteousness and so He says, "Drop down ye heavens," meaning let righteousness fall down. Did it not come down in the person of Jesus ? Therefore, it says, You need not go up or down for it, you have it nigh you, and righteousness and salvation spring forth together. He was the righteous One coming down and living here, but by His going to the grave salvation comes up too, so we do not have to look up into the heavens or down into the grave.

In this same chapter of Isaiah it says, "One shall say, In Jehovah have I righteousness and strength," the two things spoken of as lacking in Romans v. We get them both in this righteous One who is coming up from the grave. That is the direction ; everything must come from God and spring up from the grave, but it is all done.

When the Holy Spirit came upon Christ it was in the form of a dove ; He had something to do. The form of tongues afterward meant that He had something to tell. The righteousness that is by faith is listening to God, who knows all about my condition as a sinner ; has He met it ? Well, listen and know. If God is satisfied and tells me of His satisfaction, cannot I rest there and be satisfied ? That is faith, being satisfied with that which satisfies God. I am made a righteous man before God in receiving it. It is not *for* receiving it, as though it was a reward, but *in* receiving it. What a vivid contrast between

the two ; the poor Jew was still going on trying to work out his own righteousness and refusing the righteousness of God. But more than that. He puts it in the simplest form, If thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord and believe in thy heart that God raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. Why does He put it in that form ? Because in Deuteronomy the mouth is spoken of and then the heart, and following that as though He was going over those verses in Deuteronomy we have just read, He says, "What have you got in your mouth and your heart ?" Why just what Christ gave you. Believe and take what Christ has announced. It is simply following the line of the words back there—mouth first and heart afterwards. It is a comment on that one verse, the 15th.

I have nothing to do ; I confess that it is all done by Him. There is nothing on the earth simpler than the gospel as God gives it to the sinner now. And then no one need ever feel troubled as though it were not righteously done. It is. God has not only called all His grace, wisdom and power into this, as we have had, but His righteousness is manifest. If you will take Ps. xxxvi., you will find that that is all brought out too in the character of the gospel. Read it so as to add to what we have had to-day, beginning with the fifth verse. There is mercy and faithfulness ; see what a broad scope there is to it. You will find that the Old Testament is very right in all these principles of grace and righteousness. If I work out my own righteousness I am confessing myself, but if I abandon that and put another in my place I am confessing Him.

Verse 11. Here is no distinction between the Jew and the Gentile, for the same law is law unto them all. Again a quotation, "For *whoever* shall call

upon the Lord shall be saved." That was spoken of those who knew Him and would call upon Him in their need and they would be delivered, but here it is used more closely than that, and therefore we have to go back of this. While it referred to those who already knew Him that were in distress, therefore we have to come to this question, How shall they call upon Him whom they have never heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? Somebody must proclaim Him. How shall anybody proclaim unless sent of God to do it? So it is not simply that God has sent Christ and then raised Him up after He has accomplished all the work and put Him in the heavens, but from thenceforward He, knowing they must needs hear, sends out the messengers Himself, and so you see it is all of God. The work is of God, the proclamation is of God; it is all of God.

As he quotes again, "How beautiful are the feet of them that bring good tidings of good things." Well, He has sent these to give out the good tidings. But (verse 16) they did not hearken to the glad tidings, for we have in Is. liii. 1, "Who did believe our report?" There it was, the word of salvation, but they would not hear it. We say that faith comes by hearing—taking in the report. It is not as though the hearing in itself were doing something, it is the report of the thing that we get. The report of what Christ has done, and that is what faith comes by. It is not something that springs from us naturally; we have to be told something before there can ever be any faith. We have taken up a thousand things that have been told us; why we all live on what our neighbors tell us or what we get from books. A man tells me it is raining or the condition of the markets. Men are acting on it all the time. Well, then, here is a report on the gravest subject you can ever know,

the matter of sin. And God gives me this report that Christ died and was buried and rose again, and the account is settled and I am to take it. Faith comes then by hearing, hearing the word of God. Well, have they heard? Did they not hear as verse 18 had it, "Yea, verily," etc. How rich the Old Testament is in all these things. He is quoting the Old Testament all the time; this particular quotation is from Ps. xix.

But did not Israel know even when they heard it? Well, first Moses says in Deuteronomy, "I will provoke you to jealousy," etc., and Isaiah speaks more boldly still, "I am found of them that sought me not." It is already accomplished, "I became manifest to them that asked not of me." And then comes the contrast to Israel, "All the day long I have stretched out my hands to a disobedient and gainsaying people." What is the result, then? They are cast off. This chapter then shows perfect righteousness in casting off that people. Every overture was made to them as we get in Hebrews and also in David, but the word was not profitable, not being mixed with faith.

God is always having pure grace as the ground of His dealings with men. He would have had Israel on this ground if they had not turned to the other ground themselves. The sad part of course is that that sort of thing is going on to-day, and that we have instead of the gospel the old Jewish way of doing things, men going around establishing their own righteousness. And therefore it must come to this that He will say to this very same people now, "All the day long," for the last 1,800 years, "I have stretched out my hands to a disobedient and gainsaying people;" and as it says in Revelation, "I will spew them out of my mouth."

CHAPTER XI.

The theme of the last chapter was that Israel had not obtained the righteousness of God because they had not sought it by faith. But the Gentiles had, and hence this question with which the first verse opens, “Has God cast away His people, then?” And there is the whole question of righteousness. If God has cast them away, where is His righteousness? He has a right to put them aside; He took them up righteously. When they would disobey the law and all that, He said He had a right to punish them, but there was something back of that and that was the original promise made without conditions to the fathers. And so in spite of all their failures, even after the kingdom became divided into the kingdoms of Judea and of Israel, prophets went on telling about what God would do for Israel. So that God is showing that He will do, and that He must needs have a righteous ground for doing that very thing—recovering all Israel.

No, He has not cast away His people whom He foreknew. All the way through their history there is the thought that there is a remnant, and therefore reference is made to it in the time of Elijah. He said to God, “I am left alone.” It was a time when idolatry had come in thoroughly to depose God. God said to him, “I have yet 7,000 left *to me* that have not bowed the knee to Baal.” That was a good deal when all the others had done this. So even now (ver. 5) there is a remnant left according to the election of grace. First that remnant were then living and were brought into the church. All the believers among the Jews and Israel were a portion of that remnant, and they were brought into the church. That is only a token of the remnant that will after-

ward come in. It was to these that the promises were made, and of these that the prophet spoke. But we have another principle come in that the election was by grace, purely grace, "and if by grace no more by works." Now men are all alike in their works, all sinners. If a man is willing to take the place of being lost according to God, he is one of the elect. That is the way it was among the Jews at that time. All the rest were hardened. Through the Acts we had that all the time. A few received the word that Paul gave them, the others rejected it and that was the end. Till the last chapter when Paul in Rome calls the Jews together to tell them he had nothing to say against his nation, and they listening to him telling about what God has done. There were very few that believed, still there were some, and then Paul spake one word, "having eyes that see not and ears that hear not." They would not and therefore God hardened them so that they could not. We are not talking here of the Gentiles, but the gospel going out and meeting the Jews.

Ver. 7. Israel as a whole has not obtained that which she seeketh for. It was sought for by way of works; the remnant had obtained it and the rest were blinded. And then questions to confirm all this. "According as it is written," etc., —in Deut. xxix. that is written. Very remarkable that Moses just before he closed his ministry with Israel was to write a song to be kept as a memorial in regard to Israel, and in it he tells in the beginning of God's purpose and His wonderful work in regard to Israel, how He exalted them. But it closes up by speaking of their departure from Him. He afterwards speaks of their being blinded. Still further he speaks of God's grace, in chapter xxxi. So the quotation is that He had given them the spirit of slumber, etc.,

and that is going on unto this day. As Israelites they are still hardened and still blinded. Besides that we find it in David, in Ps. lxix. 22, 23, "Let their table be made a snare and a trap," etc. The very thing they had as a blessing, their table, was to become a snare to them. The quotation comes again in the 11th verse. Have they stumbled that they shouild fall? No, that stumbling is only for this interim. They have stumbled during this time until the fullness of the Gentiles be gathered in. God's purpose and design all the way through are here shown. He will carry out His design towards Israel, but here comes the interval when He can go out to man as man and take out such among them, and the Jews also as shall form the church.

Ver. 12. "Now, therefore, if this fall of them"—this stumbling for a period—"be the enriching of the Gentiles, how much more their fullness when God gathers them back." How is that? During the present period, while the Jew is set aside, we see that the fall of them is the enriching of the Gentiles. But God will not depart from His original purpose—that was, "with the house of Abraham all the nations of the earth shall be blessed," and when He brings them back having their sin put away, made His people under a new covenant, "how much more their fullness."

The present period has a much more wonderful blessing in its character because it is heavenly, but it does not hinder Him from carrying out His wonderful purpose to and by Israel when they come back.

Then the church has its specific place, and God steps aside from having to do with Israel that He may carry out this for His Son's sake. That He may gather together a people that shall reign with Him, not forgetting that He has a people on the earth and

in nowise proving unfaithful to them. So He says in verse 13, "I speak to you Gentiles also." It would be taking Israel out from where they are, the Jew and Israel too, bringing them back. What a resurrection it will be ! The whole world shall feel it.

Ver. 16. "Holy" means separated unto God. The first fruits are what He had in the beginning, from Abraham, and they were altogether separated unto God, and God has never given up that. Abraham was His, and His children were His, and are still so. Now, He says, "They are a holy people," meaning a people separated unto God. If the first fruit be holy, the lump is also holy, and if the root, so are the branches ; and if *some* of the branches—the Jews, Judah for instance, for we know nothing about the ten tribes. It does not say all the branches, for you can understand that if the ten tribes were hidden among the nations they may have wandered anywhere. But the branches that were particularly cut off were the ones that crucified the Lord. If He has left them and brought in a new people to be grafted in among them, "boast not against the branches." After all, the root of it was God's promise to Abraham and His great purpose. The bringing in of the Gentile is a mere temporary circumstance—a turning aside for a time to carry out a greater purpose in the end. But it in nowise leaves the Israelite out. So many people are taking the prophecies of the Old Testament to apply to the church. There is not a syllable that does this. They stand there for the people for whom they were written. They have nothing to do with this body of Christ that is raised and seated in heavenly places. This chapter is much needed to let us know that, and answer this people that are saying Israel's chances are over. *Some* of the branches are cut off for a time, that is all.

I could not believe Him who said, "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed to Him," if God has cast away Israel when He said He would not. Why should He not be unfaithful to me also? Is it not infinitely grand to have all the scripture prophecies brought in to apply to these things and confirm them all? When God shall have taken up a number of the Gentiles that are to form the church He will go back to Israel.

Ver. 19. Because of unbelief they were broken off, and how do you stand? Simply by faith. Any other ground than that imperils the whole matter, and so He says, "Boast not thyself." It was unbelief that put them aside. "For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest He spare not thee."

Ver. 22. God is able to graft them in on the same goodness, and to show out the same severity to us if we act as if anything in ourselves was doing the work.

Ver. 24. This tells its own story. God having set aside Israel for a time to go out to the Gentiles. It is not that His heart has turned away from Israel but He has another purpose to serve. Israel would never bless the Gentile, so God had to interpose in their behalf. But when we consider a larger matter—His counsels away back from eternity—we see at once He must break the middle wall between Israel and the Gentiles, and take up man as man, as he is on the ground of the ruin he has made of himself, and bring him into His presence a new man; and how He would have to make him a heavenly man, because the earthly man had been given up for a time.

What is given here is that He has gone out to the

Gentiles to get a people now, and that is what it means by being grafted into the old stock. Dispensationally God has a people now who were once outside when He had the other people. We shall find in the Old Testament prophecies that it is on the ground of sin being confessed and forgiven that the iniquity of Jacob is to be sought for and not found. Because it is laid on Him, as it says in Is. liii. Now when they take that place where they had all that sin and moral disease, and it was all placed to His account, at once they are restored. He is able to graft them in again.

Now the caution, "For I would not have you ignorant of this mystery." It was a fact that Israel did become wise in their own conceit. What a difference there was between the way they treated the Gentiles in the day of Christ and the way they all of them treated the outside nations when they went into the land. Their business was to put down those Amorites in the land, but to treat everyone kindly afterwards, not to make leagues with them but to be gracious towards them ; to benefit the whole world. Now, instead of keeping that position of separation from them in the spirit, they adopted their idols and then turned around and became violent against them, and would have no dealings with them in any way. Hence He says, "I speak to you Gentiles lest ye get into the same spirit and become wise in your own conceit." The danger is just the same with the Gentiles, that they should begin to feel that they were the people. It has been taught that God has left the Jew out completely and taken us, and we are to go on with the Jew left out altogether forever. This verse contradicis all that. It says, do not be wise in your own conceits because He will bring them back again. And so, "All Israel," meaning the twelve

tribes, shall be restored, "even as it is written," and it is peculiar that that is written in Is. lix., at the end of a chapter that has already been quoted in speaking of Israel and Judah in chapter iii. in summing up the verdict regarding them. But that chapter closes up this way, "The Redeemer shall return to Zion." Just what you have here, that He will get them back again. People are ready and willing to quote that which was in the first part of Romans iii., but why do they not go on and finish up the chapter? It is very peculiar that he should quote from the same chapter that gave the ground for their rejection in showing that they would be brought back.

God is going to bring in an enemy to punish them, but (verse 19) "The spirit of Jehovah shall lift up a standard against him and the Redeemer shall come to Zion," etc. There is a promise not simply of being restored unto their lost position, but of having God's word to guide them. Just look at that chapter lix. and study it a little.

Ver. 28. They have been put in the place of enemies that you might come in. There it is. Chosen of God because He had given the word to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and now for the fathers' sake, not for their own, for they had done nothing good, and when they return to the land they will be found in infidelity and all that. God has to come and take them out Himself. "For the gifts and calling of God." He gave this word and called them to be His people, and He has never retired from that. He will have them back again.

Ver. 30. "For as ye in time past," you Gentiles, "have not believed God, yet have now obtained mercy through their unbelief." Your chance, you see. That same grace that has come to us during these 1,800 years forming the church, is going to be

exerted toward them after the church is taken away. What is before us then is that they are not to be gathered to be a part of the church, but totally independent of the church, and after the church's departure Israel is to be gathered back to their own place but on the ground of Christ's death. When I find that He is showing me that Israel is going to be restored, how it confirms my faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the unchanging God; He never repents of His grace and love.

Ver. 33. This includes us all, does it not? We were in disobedience and so were they. Thus He has mercy on both sides but each in his place.

Then we close with this doxology, from verses 33-36, "O the depth of the riches," etc. Knowledge differs from wisdom in this that wisdom is the use of knowledge. I may know less of things than someone else, but when I know how to use what I do know that is wisdom. God planned way back from the foundation of the world what He would do with this earth, and planned Abraham as a channel of His blessings to mankind, and He knew all that they would do, and now when the time came to set them aside and take up another people there stood His wisdom as a way to accomplish all that He had foreplanned. How it leads us right through the whole matter that is stated so richly in Deuteronomy where we find that He is closing up that by saying how He will get them back again. Thus it was projected beforehand, and now the method of His bringing them back is His wisdom, and nowhere is it shown so fully as in the cross of Christ. Christ Himself is *the* wisdom of God, and as we have it in 1 Cor. i. 30, "He is made unto us the wisdom of God." So those are the three things,—righteousness, sanctification, and redemption, that He employs in His bringing them back.

"How unsearchable are His judgments." Why does it not say grace? Why we have had 3,000 years of judgments since He called Abraham, since He took Israel out of Egypt—nothing but judgments. What a final one it appeared when the ten tribes seemed lost utterly, and Judah cast out. But His judgments are past finding out, and so thoroughly so that the church has risen up to say, They will never be recovered, and hence this spiritualizing as they call it of the Old Testament prophecies. They are literal and are not to be spiritualized.

So His judgments are past finding out, but they are not past learning about when He teaches them, and so He has been teaching them right here. "And His ways," that is the way He carries them out. We could not find them out, He had to do it for us. Then what? Who hath known the mind of Jehovah, or who hath been His counsellor? Just as He is alone in all that He has done for us, so He is alone in all the wisdom that is connected with it. All Himself.

"For of Him and through Him," the only way—"and to Him are all things." And we close with that expression. Praise to Him and glory for ever and ever. That is not a doxology in connection with our blessing at all, but Israel's.

CHAPTER XII.

You will notice that there is never an exhortation given until there is a foundation given for it. God first tells what He has done before He asks us to do anything, and our doing is only accepting what He has done and told us about and living up to it. And then it is not to get salvation or life or specific blessing, although there is blessing in it, of course, because we are already blessed. In Acts xiii. Barnabas and Saul go into the synagogue, and after the law had been read, which means a portion of the books of Moses, word was sent to them that if they had any word of exhortation to say on. Now inasmuch as God had come out upon the ruin of Israel to begin a new creation in Jesus Christ, they had no ground for exhortation on what had been read, therefore they had to state a ground. It would not do to exhort upon the ten commandments; what could he exhort them to do on that ground? That was over. So he began by stating, "The God of our fathers chose Abraham," and then goes on with the entire history of what God had done, and last of all that He had sent Jesus whom they had crucified, and who was raised, and through Him was to come that salvation. There he had a ground for his exhortation, so he declares it. He preached forgiveness of sins, and announced that whoever believed, whether Jew or Gentile, should be saved; and there comes in an exhortation, "Beware lest you despise."

Now in this book of Romans we have had a statement of what God has done in His love, in His power, in His righteousness. Not only what He has done for us, bringing us in as sons, giving us the Holy Spirit, making us without condemnation in His presence, and then giving us the entire matter of Is-

rael from the beginning to the end, showing what He will do in His righteousness, love and wisdom.

"I beseech you *therefore*." That is the value of therefore. It is the same way in Ephesians, where three chapters of statements of the most wonderful love show us that God has placed us in heavenly places in Christ, and then one chapter occupied with giving us the counsels of God, refreshing us in that way. Then he says, "I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you." So it goes on in every epistle; first the statement of truth, and then the exhortation upon it. So have our pulpits been given to exhorting and to urging ethics and moral life upon people that had no life. The needed thing is to establish the whole matter of grace—what God has done, and if that was told out in its fullness and simplicity it seems to me that the people would naturally say "*therefore*." Receiving it as life from the dead and then it would be easy to say, Do this and that on this ground. Even in dealing with Israel God took them from Egypt and brought them for some distance through the wilderness, and then He says, "I am Jehovah that led you out of Egypt, *therefore* you shall not bow down to any other gods." But how strange if He had begun with those things before He led them out from Egypt. There would have been no ground for it. How necessary therefore that we should first have the gospel, and then all exhortations that flow out from it naturally. Now as we have had in Romans the great principle of how God saves sinners, the exhortations will take in the entire grasp of human living.

From verses 1-13 is what we shall do, as nearest to God, members of the body of Christ; then comes down to individual action in regard to our brethren or others, and then as to how we shall act to other

people. Then the xiii. takes up the matter of how we shall act towards the Government ; the xiv. how we shall act towards those who are weak, that is giving up everything ourselves individually, that we shall become servants of all. Above all things not asserting our own liberty and importance. This is continued through the xv., and then we come to the great principle afterwards, that it all referred to what Christ did Himself, "Even He pleased not Himself." Do you suppose He could talk to us that way if we were not saved men ?

Give me the gospel that makes me like Christ. Never reverse it. Never tell a man to do something to make him like Christ ; make Him like Christ in order that He may do it. In the case of the child that is born, the essential thing is that he is a human being, and therefore is to act a human being's life. But for many a year he is simply taken care of ; nothing is asked of him but to simply live, be nourished, appreciated, cherished, and then finally he is sent out and told to act as a man, because he is a man. Just so the scripture, and I dwell upon it because there is so much of something else going on to-day, urging people to do, do, do, before they are told what is done. It was an infinite mercy to wash you from guilt and sin, and then to meet it perfectly in Christ, righteously and so wondrously that there is no particle of condemnation left. Those are the mercies that are spoken of here.

"That ye present your bodies," etc. That is about all you have, is it not ? You have been made a new spirit dwelling in the old body, now present the body. In that body serve God just where you are. The truth of Romans is simply that I have been saved through Christ. I have died with Him and I have risen through Him. Colossians goes further

and says you are risen with Him, but Romans only says you are risen and staying on the earth. I am looked upon as down here in the wilderness. Then as a new man in the wilderness, live in this body but present it a living sacrifice to God, as we had in chapter vi. "We count ourselves to have died with Him, and He that is dead is justified with Him." And now reckon yourselves to be alive through, not in, our Lord Jesus Christ. I see in the margin that they put it "holy service." That is right. Holy always means separate. Now, then, your life is separated unto God. It was unto Satan before.

First of all you do not belong here, although you are in the world ; and then, what next ? "Be not conformed to this age." It is very wonderful in Jas. ii. where it gives faith working. You have these two illustrations—Abraham denying all his hopes and going to sacrifice his only son, and Rahab denying her country. Both giving everything up ; and what are they both called ? Faith ! In the one, murder ; in the other, treason, if not faith.

Now, then, you believe that you are redeemed out of this present age, then live above it. Be not conformed to it at all. You believe that in the cross of Christ you have been crucified to all this ; and been raised up in Christ ; then the first thing is, be not conformed to this world, but rather be transformed by the renewing of the mind—which means the practical thing, your intelligence taking hold of it practically. Not the renewing of the spirit but the mind. What then ? Proving. That is, practically exhibiting what is that good and perfect and acceptable will of God. I am told that Christ did not please Himself but God. You keep on doing that and it will come more and more to you that you are doing it. Christ said, "I know the Father loves me." If

you walk as such you will know it too. The Holy Spirit within you ungrieved and walking in fellowship with Him is proving what is that good, perfect and acceptable will of God.

That is the general exhortation covering the entire ground of what we will go over now in detail, beginning with verse 3. God begins with what is nearest to Himself in asking us to love. The only thing I belong to in the universe is the body of Christ. Men join lots of societies and fraternities, but there is no bond for us but the body of Christ. I have not to join the church because I am in it the moment I am saved; and I do not join them—I am joined by the Holy Spirit.

Ver. 4. *We are* that, you see. No joining it, therefore, for we are there. And now He begins by telling me how to act there. First, as it is in Eph. iv., it was the giving up of everything of self. Here it is the same way—think as I ought to think of myself because I am nothing. Now, being thus a member of the body, there are many gifts to the body, indeed every portion of the body is a gift—every muscle, and the body cannot do without any of them. He has given to each man a gift according to the faith. Then we have these gifts for the sake of telling out that truth, you see, of manifesting that faith. It is according to the measure of that faith, not simply according to the measure of my belief on the Lord Jesus Christ. That is a settled thing already.

Ver. 6. How much has God given to each one of us? He begins—“We are members of one body and each members of the other.” Having gifts differing according to the grace given to us. If it be prophecy, what must I do with my gift of prophecy? Why, prophesy! I am not to turn in my knowledge of the truth unto myself and live in it; I am to tell others.

It is not mine. No gift a man has is his own. You see in the world that if a man has a special faculty for making money, he forthwith begins to spend it on himself; he has a bigger house, larger grounds, and altogether his wants increase correspondingly to his greater income. Another has a faculty for art or science, and he uses it for the sake of getting money. That is not a thing that God has given him as a new man—that is for business. He is not to use his knowledge of the scriptures for himself except to practice love in it. He is to give it out. If you want to know what prophecy is, turn to 1 Cor. xiv. There you find that a prophet is one that gives out the word in whatever form God may give it to him—indeed the word “prophecy” means “to speak for another.” There is not a man that has any gift whatever that has a right to hold it as his own. That is what Paul meant when he said, “Woe is me if I preach not the gospel.”

Q. What is the meaning of “According to the measure of our faith?”

A. According to the proportion of faith that God has given me. It is not experience.

Q. Can a man take it in by reading it and give it out without following it?

A. No. In the days of the prophets in the Old Testament they did not necessarily have to know what they were saying. The Holy Spirit was not given to them as the power of their apprehension of the truth but only to speak it. But we are told in 1 Pet. i., “They searched what their meaning might be,” etc. The difference is that while we have truth given to us, we also have the Holy Spirit given us to understand the truth. Prophecy does not mean foretelling always, but simply speaking for another. The prophets of old were just as much prophesying when

they were denouncing judgments as when they were foretelling.

Ver. 7. People get the idea of ministering as of a minister. It means service, plain and simple. Phœbe went on to Rome in chapter xvi., and that was service. Or Barnabas going from Jerusalem to Antioch. It was service ; he went right off in search of Paul at once, leaving everything ; it was complete service.

We get also that there is another kind of service—preaching. How does he say you are to do your service, grudgingly ? Let us see. “He that teacheth, let him go on with his teaching”—serve in his teaching. Teaching you will see of course is a branch of the great matter of prophecy. It is taking the word of God and opening it so people can get it—serving in that respect. Then exhortation comes next. A preacher does not necessarily go any further than to open the scriptures. A man that cannot open any of it may be used to exhort his brethren. Let him do it in simplicity of spirit, not obeying somebody else. Many a man that was called of God to preach the gospel thinks he must go and teach. It is a blunder to do these things. Do not imitate anybody.

Q. What distinction do you make between exhortation and prophesying ?

A. Prophesying covers the whole ground, both teaching and preaching (which is exhortation), which you see are different.

Notice there are two classes of gifts spoken of. Prophecy is the one which you ought to desire most of all. Now there was a gift of tongues, but nobody understood it but the man that spoke it, and he had to have an interpreter. Therefore why not desire a gift of God that may be of some use to others ? “He

that prophesies speaks to *man* in edification." It is to men for their comfort and profit. Prophecy does not have to do with my speaking to God. It is when I am going out towards man.

Ver. 8. "He that gives with simplicity." You will notice that the Holy Spirit here is taking up what we might say are common things, such as giving, teaching, exhorting, rejoicing, praying, ruling ; but to every one of these there is a peculiar style, and that is precisely what we get by all the teaching that we have had in the former part of the book. People are accustomed to giving. Even the ones that are unsaved do that. But he adds here, "with simplicity." Probably no word is more misunderstood than that word simplicity. I remember saying to a person that I thought she was simple and she thought it was not a compliment at all. It is the utter emptiness of self. If anyone would become wise let him be a fool. That is the word used in the first portion of Matt. v., "Blessed are the pure in heart." Now pure means unmixed. It is just that and nothing else ; pure and simple are the same thought, and purity of heart has nothing to do with morality at all ; it has to do with a heart that has but one object before it. So simplicity has but one object.

Now, then, how does the man of the world give ? He always has another object. He has himself before him. He has either to be told of the result, how much good it will do, or how much he will get from it. It is always giving from a selfish nature. I know of a man who is considered quite open-handed ; but where does it come in ? He has a yacht and will invite several friends to go out sailing with him ; they have feasts and all that, but they none of them need them, they could each have one of their own. When you make a feast do not invite those who can

invite you back again, that is not simplicity ; that is what you have in Luke. The cross of Christ comes in and makes new men, and he tells them to give with simplicity—give solely for Him as the result of the new man. You see then that this being in Christ gives character to every one of these things. Hence they cease to be common things that we speak of, and are exalted into a distinctive character, as new. They are like Christ. He had ever before Him the Father. He pleased not Himself. That was simplicity. They have put in the margin, “with liberality.” True liberty is freedom and is precisely the same in its germinal thought—without any mixture. It is the same way in the next thought. “He that shows mercy with cheerfulness.” That distinguishes it from the mercy that would be shown by a man ordinarily. When a man is commended to the mercy of a court, for instance, the judge takes into consideration some circumstances, and perhaps gives him a few years less imprisonment. That would not do for you and me. Must I consider all these favorable circumstances ? No. The showing of mercy is a thing given for nothing. Does God give His life by measure ? Everything from God is unmeasured. Much love, much mercy and kindness of men is engendered by circumstances. When God loved you had you commended yourself to God in any way that He should love you ? No. Then I am to love others thus.

There is a distinctive class of rulers in the assembly of God, elders or bishops. Elders as giving the character, and bishops as giving the work. Bishop means overseer. We have in 1 Tim. the directions to these. Who is to be among the bishops? Not a novice, lest he be puffed up, etc. And he goes on, “Not one that cannot rule his own family.” There

never was any such thing in scripture, however, as one bishop being over any part of the country. There was always a plurality. When he speaks about ruling, how? With diligence. That is giving the whole heart to it; a man knows what it is to be diligent in trying to make money, but here is God putting him in a work distinctively connected with His saints, and I am told to be diligent in it. Eph. iv. says, "Giving all diligence to keeping the unity of the spirit;" then He gives you a sevenfold unity of the spirit. Peter says, "Giving all diligence to make your calling and election sure." There is the emptiness of self surely, if I am to be diligent, ruling others, if it applied to business only, but it might be applied to one's self. There is no such thought in Romans. Now that very diligence that I show in business to make money I am to show in working for others in the assembly of God. It has to do with ruling or leading others along in the truth. Is there authority associated with that office of ruling? Only the authority associated with truth itself that the spirit would give to a man, but after all it is not an authority that is final in itself. The final authority is the assembly. Thus in Cor. v. there was a man from whom they must separate, but the elders were not told to do it; the elders might look into it but the final act is the assembly's, and so it says, "When you are gathered together" (all of them), "put the man out." And afterward, "Take such a man back," etc. So you see the whole assembly had to act in it. In John xx. where we had the formation of the assembly in particular, when Christ said to Mary, "Go and tell my brethren I ascend to my Father and your Father," etc., and He met them with, "Peace be unto you;" then again, "peace," which had to do with His own peace; then breathed and said, "Re-

ceive the Holy Spirit." Then, "Whosoever sins ye remit"—that is the whole assembly. This man who repented in 2 Cor. was forgiven in that he was taken back. Then the other action was, "As my Father sent me into the world, even so I send you." Not to be of the world just as Christ was not of the world. There you have all the elements of the church brought out more especially when Paul comes in in the Acts. Peter had the case given to him, who was to open the door. The church was a building, and Paul speaks of himself as a master builder. Peter was to open the door of the building (the kingdom), but the church was to be built. Then these elders would have all the matter to do except the final act, which is the putting out or the receiving, which the whole assembly is called upon to do.

Ver. 9. "Let love be without dissimulation." Mark the way of the world; all these things were the actions of the new man founded on what God has done. The first verse says, "I beseech you by the mercies of God." Now we have received the mercies. Everything spoken of here would be done differently by the unsaved man. There is a constant feigning in human love—it is a surface matter. So now he says, "Let your love be unfeigned." Everything we do is to be in the light, right outdoors, open. And I am quite sure that with the love of God in my heart, not my own love, I can love just as He does, openly. Better is an open enemy than a secret friend. This is the lesson for us. Open love that is the light.

Abhor that which is evil. God does not deal in gentle words in the matter of evil. It is absolutely to be hated. God hates. It is just the position of a holy nature towards that which is evil, and you and

I are made holy, for we belong to a holy God and therefore we are to abhor everything that is evil. In 1 Thess. v. we have, "Abstain from every form of evil." The old translation had "every appearance of evil." It does not mean that which looks like evil, but real sin, when it first appears. In Ephesians it is, "Be ye angry and sin not." Christ says we are to be angry at evil. I sin if I let my anger go to the man, therefore it says, "Let not the sun go down upon your wrath"—do not keep it over night; do not foster it till next day. It is a dangerous thing to have about anyway. What then? "Cleave to that which is good." We find a very sweet expression of that in Phil. iv. "Finally, brethren, if there be any virtue, etc.—think on these things."

The man that is going about trying to find some evil has a thankless job, and moreover he is going to do a great deal of damage. That is not our business. There are people who come among the saints of God and in a very little while they can set them all by the ears.

Ver. 10. "As to brotherly love, be kindly affectioned towards one another." Brotherly love is but brotherly love. I love him because he is my brother; but I must have back of this the love of God. So in 2 Pet. i. 7, when it comes to brotherly kindness it adds to it "love," which is more than brotherly kindness.

I have heard some speak of it something in this way: "Well, I must be Christ's or I would not do this; yesterday I forgave a man who struck me, and I could not have done that if I was not Christ's. Could you not do a single thing not evil without cackling over it like a hen that has laid an egg? Or, "If I had not been a Christian I would have knocked that man down." Amidst a thousand faults it is

possible to find Christ's likeness in your brother. You see then how this cross comes in close to a man in all his thoughts and dealings. It has to do with our dealings one with another as part of the body of Christ.

Ver. 11. Nine times out of ten this is quoted "diligent in business." This is not true. There is a verse in Prov. xxii. speaking of one who is diligent in business standing before kings. As kings go now we do not want to stand before them. That is only earthly after all. But here it is another question, and yet men will give themselves up to making money hand over fist and say, "But did you not know that it tells me to be diligent in business?" To such I have to answer, No, I have never heard it. It says, "not slothful." The old translation said "business," but it is not business in the original. It is "not slothful in diligence." It is talking about saints themselves, not their making money. What is my business among the saints? Suppose I am one who rules; then in a diligent way my work is to be done—not slothfully. It is connected with other things, you see; and what kind of a spirit am I to have in it? "Fervent," which means burning with ardor. This is Christ's own spirit. And then to give it this glow he says, "serving the Lord." There is not a particle of what you are to do in your shop, as to the shop, but as to what we are doing ourselves as children of God. My workings for Christ are to be done in a diligent glad way, not perfunctorily. Then the spirit is linked with it, and the fact that I am serving the Lord characterizes the whole matter.

Ver. 12. Now then for my own heart. "Rejoicing in the hope." What is the hope of the Christian as you know him? You that attend the prayer-meetings? Do not they hope to be saved at last?

And when you come to look at the scripture and see what the hope is there, would you not say the church has lost its hope? Instead of everyone knowing he is saved and then rejoicing in the hope of the coming of the Lord, which is *the* hope, they have turned it around backwards. I am sure that if I have the right hope I can understand what it is to be rejoicing in the hope, and if I am doing this do you suppose I will be bothering about what this man and that man says? There is wholesomeness and health here. Then as regards tribulation. We are told in chapter v. to rejoice in tribulation after it was said that we rejoice in the hope of the glory. The whole scene here of the wilderness journey will be tribulation. It does not mean simply some little matter of persecution that may spring up. Israel every moment in the wilderness was reminded that they were in the wilderness. Not to have all the things that were promised in the land was the tribulation. They had only the rocks instead of the blessings promised. The tribulation is the condition of things in the wilderness which you encounter if you are walking with God. If you say, "I will go to the races once in a while," that is not tribulation when you suffer from it. The man's wife turns from him because he will walk in the truth. When that comes, that is tribulation. Many a man is hindered by his wife when he ought to be acting in the truth. You see then what tribulation is. Now he says, "Patience." Turn to Thess. iii. "The patient endurance of the hope in the sight of God the Father." Yes, hoping for the Lord Jesus; and then in Colossians you get it this way, "strengthened with all might according to the power of the glory unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness." There is the tribulation. And in Peter we have it, "Happy are you if the

spirit of glory and God dwell upon you." God never forgot His Son was passing through this scene. He opened the heavens repeatedly to speak to Him. It was the one passing through the tribulation, and now come His brethren passing through the same tribulation, and He tells you how to do it—bear. But it is not bearing it to do just like the rest of the world do. That is not patience at all. You might as well talk to a boy that is under discipline in the corner and give him some candy. He will sit there and eat it. Getting worldly comforts is not tribulation.

Then the matter of dependence. As I go along I am to be entirely dependent. As regards prayer, he says, with perseverance. As it said in Thess. v., "Pray without ceasing;" that is, do not stop praying. There it was in view of the coming of the Lord. So here after saying, "Rejoicing in the hope and having patience," you are waiting, keep on praying. You do not have to pray for what you are hoping for, or perhaps for anything for yourself. If you have to pray for yourself there is failure or something wrong. But you have all the saints to pray for and lost sinners to pray for, and you will find enough things.

We come now to others. "Distributing to the necessities of the saints." Hospitality has to do with your own home. That is all we have our pockets filled for, to give to others, especially the saints. That closes up this portion of this chapter, and these exhortations. They have to do with this household of God. The closing up is "given to hospitality." And let us remember the last, too, distributing to the necessities of the saints. In Acts ii. they continued in the apostle's doctrine and fellowship—that was the distribution of money. I show my fellowship with my brother in his need by giving to him. The other

was breaking the bread and prayer. The new way, the modern collection, is a thing the scriptures know nothing about. These things are all marked with Satan's trademark. They do such things in the world. They do it to show what they give. Christ said, "When thou givest let not thy left hand know what thy right doest." Of course if I am distributing till my pocket is empty I cannot do it any more, but the principle is the same, and when Christ said, "The poor you have always with you," He said one of the best things for His people, and when the time comes that nobody needs the surplus in your pocket that time will be a bad time. Let us learn all these things.

Ver. 14. "Bless." Suppose it stopped there; I might leave room for myself to curse a little, but it says bless and curse not. The whole turn of my heart should be to do good all the time. There ought not to be in the heart of any new man anything like a curse, and while I am to abhor evil, still there is to be no cursing. "Rejoice with them that rejoice." This means of course in things which are in the Lord. "Weep with them that weep." This is the truest idea of sympathy. This is deeper than sympathy, it is fellowship; it is having partnership in their joy and in their grief. In all of their afflictions He was afflicted, and the angel of His presence was with them. In the wilderness the children of Israel disobeyed, showed their rebellious spirit, and hence they had to have thirty-eight years added to the two, making forty years in the wilderness. Still, there was Jehovah's presence; in the tabernacle He consented to go with them for that forty years. What patience there was in God's action! Here He puts you and me there. When Christ gave His disciples word to go out into the world, He said to them, "I

am with you." Indeed it is a mark which distinguishes us as God's people that we are allowed to suffer with one another, not to stand aloof but to bear one another's burdens as we will get further along. "Be of the same mind one toward another." I am not to have partiality. It is woefully easy to pick up a little company of believers whom we love and go herding with them; but I am to be of the same mind toward all—gracious and ready to share with them all in whatever comes to them without partiality in that respect.

"Set not your mind on high things but go along with things which are lowly." You see how much better that is than the old version which says, "descend to man." Why any distinction towards anybody? It means go along with the lowly. Do not make up a class for yourself but go along with the regular company, all of them. The church was used as a low thing in a low place, you know. It is likened to the grain of mustard seed which is the smallest of all seeds. The seed is the word of God. When it grows, therefore, it should be the lowliest of all herbs, but it does not of course. It becomes a great tree. Instead of being an herb which is taken up in the fall and done away with altogether, it goes on year by year increasing in magnitude. Christ never speaks of planting trees you know, and that should teach us that going along in a lowly way and on a lowly plane is what He wants. And it is a solemn thing when the birds of the air (which means Satan) get to lodge in the branches of the church which has become firmly rooted in the world.

Quite in accordance with it is the next, "Be not wise in your own conceits." What a tendency they had if they got a little bit of knowledge of the word to pity other folks. How the last condition of the

church on the earth is spoken of in this way. It is not worth while to be wise in our own conceit, is it? Did you ever notice that it is the heart that gets the things after all, and not the intellect? It will be a mere accumulation of ideas, unless every word of God sinks into our vitals to make us act differently.

“Render to no man evil for evil.” The old man can do that. By being a child of God you are made more sensitive to evil, but you are not to return to it. Then the next. It is worth while for us to take care that we be not dishonest or evil in any way. Let us seek things that are honest. Peter says if you suffer as an evildoer, what thank have you? But if any man suffers as a Christian then the spirit of God rests on him. You see the difference. Only let me be Christ’s. Therefore I should never get in debt, should I? How a man, especially a Christian man, loses reputation if he gets in debt. The Christian has no business to carry on his work or his family in such a way as to get in debt. Seek the things that are honorable among men. It should be known of me as a child of God that I do not owe any man anything. Provide things honest in the sight of all men. Men can judge those things while there are lots of things they cannot judge. There is more testimony in living than in all that you can talk.

Ver. 18. “If it be possible live peaceably with all men.” You see in every quarrel there are two people, your adversary and yourself. Therefore as much as lies in you be peaceable. There is plenty of room in this world to walk away from a man that is quarrelsome. You do not have to answer everybody that speaks sharply. Sometimes there are men that have to have their own way at all hazards. Do not you be one of them, that is all. Of course this is said to us in relation to the world.

He is not saying a word to the world as to what it should do. Now He gives you a very good reason for it ; He says, "Avenge not yourselves, but give place to wrath"—that is God's wrath. He has said, "Vengeance is mine and I will repay," and He said it about His own suffering people, and He says it about us. He will look after His people's interests. We have no excuse for losing our tempers once in our lives. Do not let us do it. A man that yields to his temper is always wrong, no matter what. If I yield to acquisitiveness and steal just a little, is not that wrong? So to yielding one's temper. There cannot be circumstances that make such a thing right. If that were acted upon would not that settle this matter of "As much as lieth with you live peaceably with all men?" A brother comes to me and says, "A certain one is speaking evil about me and I am just going to let him know he cannot do that sort of thing with me." Ah, remember you are a child of God, and you have to be perfectly still and not say a word about it. Do not forget what an immense advantage he had in being a child of God. Do not let us forget how rich we are. These men who speak galling words will forget them by and by, and God will live forever. What must I do then? "If thine enemy hunger, feed him, for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head." Judgment in scripture is always fire, so I think that this means heaping up judgments on his head. It is leaving him to God, giving place to His wrath, who has said, "I will repay."

CHAPTER XIII.

Now we come to another character of action altogether. It was first in the church of God, afterwards with individuals, then those without, the world, and now we come into our relation with the government. Let everyone be subject to the authorities. It does not make any difference what kind of laws they make, whether I like them or not I am to be subject to them. We see how thoroughly unworldly the character is. This is one of the most unworldly of characters and chapters. It is because we are out of the world that all these things are said to us. If I was part and parcel of it I would not have to have it said to me, but being a foreigner and never to be naturalized I have to be told. It is because we have found life in another life another realm and condition, and if you will recall the fact that Christ said in John xx. to His own, "As my Father sent me into the world even so have I sent you also." We have no business in this world to-day except as sent here. I do not mean by that the earth, you understand. That is the thing we live on, and I can enjoy the fruits of it and the mountains and rivers as much as anybody. But the world is man and his system of living, of things political, religious, social, etc., all that is committed to him of government in any way. When I was crucified with Christ that was a reality. In chapter vi. it said, "We are crucified with Christ," and further along it said, "Reckon yourselves to have died to sin and to be alive unto God through our Lord Jesus Christ." Where do I belong then? Why, where does Christ belong? That is the answer. To learn then that salvation means that you have not a link with this world is the lesson. That link was broken in the cross. You have no

more right to vote than you have to bow down to the Virgin Mary. There is nothing clearer than that brethren in the whole scripture. I have no more right to vote in this country than I have to go over to Austria and mount the throne. No child of God has any place in this world in any respect. Take the thing as radical, won't you, and your faith and joy will increase the more you get hold of this. Suppose I go into a strange city. I am just as much subject to the laws in force there as I am when at my home. I do not suppose half of you here are citizens of New York. Yet you have to obey all the laws here, and because some of you are from New Jersey or Connecticut, you would not think you had a right to disobey the laws of the State of New York. That is precisely the relation we bear to the laws of the world. I am related to the laws of these United States precisely as I would be related to the laws of Kamschatka, should I be there. That is the only way to look at it, for it is the only way the scriptures put it. If I belonged to this country as part of the body politic I would have no such word as that given me.

My business is to obey ; how vastly superior a position of that kind is. I pass through this world like a stranger, obeying everything. The child of God becomes the most valuable of citizens because he is obeying in every state he is in. The first reason for this is the sweetest of all—the authorities are of God. Not that He elected the Mayor, or the Governor, or put Queen Victoria on the throne, but that He instituted government itself. Man is such an utter fool that he could not invent government. You go back and you will find that there is no such thing as human law or government for over sixteen centuries after man was formed—from Adam down to the

flood ; and then after the flood God instituted government, and He put the sword in the hands of man and said, “ Whoso sheddeth man’s blood by man shall his blood be shed.” The sword is the emblem of authority, and God gave it to man and therefore it is right. We learned in Dah. ii. 20, “ All authority proceeds from God forever.” There is Gentile authority given by God, and it is peculiar that God gave into the hand of His worst enemy authority—Babylon, when Nebuchadnezzar came and took away His people prisoners. Remember that God had political authority on the earth for centuries. He had His throne in the centre of Jerusalem and reigned as a king over His people, and again in the tabernacle in the wilderness, and then at last because of their iniquity He was driven away, and Ezek. x. shows Him leaving. After that He is spoken of as the God of heaven, and He committed the authority to man, and therefore Daniel said, “ The God of heaven hath committed the authority to *you*.” After it said that there should be *other* kingdoms, and the Medo-Persians, Grecians, Romans, all came in, all given by God. God was not pleased with the laws that any of them made, but He gave the authority into their hands, and made His people obey their laws and told them to pray for the king of the country into which they were banished. They were always strangers for their home was Judea. So in 1 Tim. ii. we are to pray for those that are in authority. If I were a Republican I could not pray for a Democratic President, or vice versa—but I am not a partisan so I can pray without prejudice. You could very easily understand this thought if we were obliged to come under cover to this room to-day to read God’s word together, as has been the case many times in other days. If we had to do so there would

be dishonesty; therefore we pray for the government that we may live honestly. When you and I belong up there we are not strangers there but down here. "I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims." So the first reason then was because God was the author of all government, and when God says do it then I am to do it and it does not make any difference whether the law is oppressive to me or not. I am to obey it. The child of God that is walking in fellowship with God can never grumble at taxes; can never be wanting to change laws. There is One that is going to change laws, and times, and seasons, and that is Anti-Christ, and you and I have nothing to do with changing them any more than we have to change the movements of the planets. So you see you have no vote here. I did read some time ago that there was talk of having an enactment in this State, enjoining every man who lived here to vote. Well, suppose they did, and they made it a penal offense for me not to vote; I do not think they would take my head off, but they might fine me and then I should have to pay the fine, that is all. There is no such word as the will of man expressed in the word of God, brethren. Let us be radical, for this is radical. The old creation had voting but we are in the new creation. We belong to one who is the head of the government; do not vote for others, then. You and I are subject. If all the rest of the sixty millions are sovereigns there are some who have to be subjects, and that means you and me.

Q. Do you hold that a child of God has no right to hold public office?

A. How could he without belonging to some political party? In Cor. vi. it says, "Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers." Now a yoke is a thing whereby we pull together in a certain

direction. If I join a political party I am pulling with them, etc. We would have a special common purpose, like oxen yoked together. Then I have done just what I was told not to do. There is not a political party that has the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ for its object. Then it will not do for me to say I will go down into the world and join something there when He has said that I am not to be unequally yoked together with unbelievers.

Q. It is true, however, that devout men have held public office. Take for instance the Governor of Massachusetts.

A. Whom are we to follow, man or the word of God? I know that Governor Briggs was a very sweet man years ago. I remember him very well, and he was a devout man; and President Harrison also, and so most folks are members of churches. Mayor Grant is a member of a church.

Some will tell you that you ought to vote as much as you ought to go to the communion table; but their communion table is no better than their voting booth. Besides, I exercise my will when I vote. The principle is this—what fellowship hath light with darkness? Go out from among them, be separated from them. God says I will be your Father. Did He say He would be the Father of the United States government? The passage I quoted from 2 Cor. vi. is very often misappropriated. It is applied to the marriage relationship. It has nothing to do with it, for a man cannot "come out" from his wife; if he is married to her he stays with her. 1 Cor. vii. says so. You had no business to marry her if she was not a Christian, according to that same chapter. You have been crucified. You recognize that the word says so. Well, then, here is a political party, composed of all sorts, rum-sellers, etc.,

that can be gotten together. Are they executed criminals? Many of them ought to be probably, but are they? Before God? Can you and they come together? Can the man that was executed yesterday get back into society to-day? Now these are still living. Very well, He turns to you in Colossians and says, "Why as though living in the world are ye subject to ordinances?" The only question I would put to a child of God is this: "Have you died or are you living?" If you have died you are out of this. The first thing is to get the truth of the word. In 2 Tim. iii. 16, he says, "All scripture is given by the inspiration of God." Then it is profitable for teaching. No, the first thing to get is that the word actually teaches you that. If it teaches you the opposite there will be no question, because you are probably used to voting. I saw it twenty-eight years ago and have not voted since. But do not shirk the taxes. I do not know much about them, and as I do not vote I don't suppose my head is worth much, but if they ask me for such a tax I shall pay it. I am to honor the Mayor and all the officers of the government. I honor the policeman on the corner with his club. I fear his club and honor him, and yet he may be a very dishonorable man for all I know. Well, then, for this he says we pay honor and tribute.

Ver. 9. Owe no man anything. This does not pertain to the matter of money debts alone. I am not to refuse respect to the law and the officers of the law, and honor to whom honor is due. You will remember that in Jude that is one of the elements of the apostasy, that they showed that spirit of rebellion against the authorities—"Speaking evil of dignities" is the way it is mentioned there. They denied the only sovereign, the Lord God, and refused Him the place of authority, besides not recognizing the au-

thorities on the earth. The child of God is just the opposite of this. He has been put to death and so has no self to hold, and therefore the word comes here, "For this cause we pay tribute." Then we come to the matter of money debts. The Christian is above the world and therefore he is never to be in debt to its people. If I expect the Lord Jesus I ought to be ready at any moment to leave. Just as sure as he is expecting the Lord Jesus just so sure ought he to be ready to leave when He comes. Of course there are none of us who live as simply as we should. The church became apostate over 1,500 years ago. I am to buy goods and sell them as a man that belongs in heaven, and all my intercourse with men should be as one not of this world. O, if we could have that before us all the time, how gracious we would be to everybody. Not trying to get all we could all the time, but giving out to everyone, and above all things, not owing. What business have I to be living on the property of another? Nothing less than that is living up to the standard. A brother said to me yesterday that I was very hard. It is because the word is hard. Owe no man anything but love one another. Come to the simple principle of the law of our new life, and in Romans, Ephesians, Colossians, as well as Galatians, the whole matter of what this law asks of us is rendered by man's becoming a new man. In chapter viii. we had, "That the righteous requirements of the law might be fulfilled in us." Of course a great deal more is called for, as in Col. iii. we were told that we ought to mortify our members on the earth, and then it goes on with the ways of things with the law itself. So do not understand that because this speaks of acting according to the law that therefore I am under the ten commandments. You quite understand that,

You do not feel very deeply about the laws of this State regarding murder, rape or burglary. You have no idea of disobeying them. But you are fulfilling them all the time. So it is that you are obeying the law of the ten commandments even though you are not under them. It is because we are under the law of love which covers all these things and more. And then if I go back to what we had in chapter v., that the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit that is given us. And I am to go around shedding out the love of God all the time. Of course I am not going to commit offences if I am filled with that love. But it would never be fulfilled if we were walking after the flesh instead of after the spirit.

Ver. 11. The first thing here is that love fulfills ; second, the time is very short. It is very much nearer than it was when I believed. It is looking to this that every believer gets the hope placed before him. There is no true gospel preached that does not take in what I am saved for, and therefore presenting a hope before me of the Lord's coming. Suppose, then, I believed five years ago that the Lord was coming ; well, now He says that the time is very much nearer. In all teachings for us you are placed in that posture of looking for the coming of the Lord, and there is nothing that ever denies it or would weaken our expectation. In chapter viii. it said we are saved in the hope and thus we are looking for that. It told us that the whole creation is waiting for the manifestation of the Son of God. And here as a second argument in regard to unworldliness, owe no man anything, have nothing to do with politics, etc., aloof from all parties of men and not moving the world along at all, we have the argument that the time is short.

Q. What is a man going to do with children to educate? Perhaps he may want to have something to do with getting proper school trustees.

A. You are not obliged to send them there. Why should you disobey the word of God in order to meet the case? I am cast upon Him alone, as though He and I were the only beings in the world. Instead of that, here is a world under Satan and in it everything is run to suit him. You might as well say I am going to live in the Sandwich Islands, and am going to adjust the government there to suit my needs. No, sir. I am going to live apart from it, out from it, not among it. A man cannot be a citizen of two places, and your citizenship is in heaven. Germans are not citizens of New York. I simply am here for a little while, transact what I have to do, go away again. The fact of the matter is, brethren, crucifixion is a real thing, and I have never known a man yet that was hung to go back and order things around here.

We have been brought up all our lives on texts instead of on scripture—little ones culled out and a topic made of them. Take it *all*, it is given freely, why nibble at it? And in regard to this question of voting, it is the Holy Spirit that takes this whole matter in charge. Does the Holy Spirit say to Brother So and So, "Vote the Republican ticket," and to Brother So and So, "Vote the Democratic ticket?" Just as much as He told one to be a Baptist, and one a Presbyterian or a Methodist. The Holy Spirit is the one that is to bring us into relation with what is our place. The Holy Spirit makes true to me the fact that I have ceased to be a citizen here and am a citizen up there.

It is not necessary that we hurry through this chapter, but it is necessary that you should get it

clearly in your minds. It is not saying that you should believe me, but it is quite imperative that you believe what God says.

If those who say a Christian ought to vote as much as he ought to go to a communion table will bring me a single passage in scripture that will confirm such a thing I will be glad to look into it, as it differs from a hundred others as you well know. All the teachings the other way are contrary to the teachings of God. Suppose I should yield on this subject. I do not think any of you would come again. It appeals to your conscience.

Q. Yes, but how are we to get there?

A. God will tell you. He said it and if you ask Him He will show you how to get into the right state. We do not like the sharp edge of the word, of course, but after all, the fellowship of the word is more than comfort down here. And whoever said that you and I must have plenty of comforts and wealth down here? Those were given to the Jew and have never been given to anyone else.

Ver. 13. You see we are told in John that God is light and afterwards that God is love. These two words characterize God as He is. It is not simply that He has love and light, but that He *is* both. Light is that which manifests everything, and so if we walk in the light it will be in such a way as will bring out all there is, concealing nothing. We had enough of that in chapter vi. Then in the negative He says, "Not in revelling or drunkenness, not in chambering or wantonness." A person said she would not come again because I said we were not under the ten commandments, and she got it that I said we were not to obey them or anything in them. What a difference. If the cross puts men to death and does not allow a single thought of evil, is not

that obedience to every command? If God's love is shed abroad in my heart, is not that fulfilling the entire range of commandments? But I am not under the law as my rule of life. I am under Christ. We should do nothing that will not bear the light, and that should be the test for all our conduct. Suppose everything we do should be ferreted out and put in the newspaper the next morning. Do you suppose we could bear it? Or go further; suppose every thought was written out. Well, we are to walk so that we could bear it.

Q. Does any man so walk?

A. I do not know men. You must go to the experience meetings to find that out.

Suppose I do not live so as to bear the light. I bring my actions into the light to make them exposed by confession. It is not that I am actually keeping from sin in every act, but I am having the light expose me. Get more acquainted with God, just as you did with your wife. When you first knew her she was not the supreme object of your love, but she grew to be so, and that is the way Christ will. Christ gets to be before me after He occupies my affections, and the world becomes less and less powerful by the positive occupation with the person set forth in His word. That closes chapter xiii.

CHAPTER XIV.

There is very little worship in the church of to-day. The service consists of hymns sung with more regard for their tune than for the words, prayers for almost everybody in and out of the church, a collection, more songs, and a sermon in which of course there is no worship at all. So that if a man goes to church for worship he does not get it at all. Let us learn now how to worship. First of all we can worship God at all times, but there is a particular time set apart for the church as such to worship. It is the first day of the week, and in the breaking of the loaf there is showing the Lord's death which is the foundation of everything. We are letting Him know that we enter into it. We are returning to Him what He has given us—the value of Christ's death. I have gone to meeting Sunday mornings, time after time, and never heard a word of prayer, and I thanked God for it, for God gets one time when we can tell Him something about how we rejoice over what He has done for us. Some may have said, Let us pray, but they meant, Let us worship. Now, then, it cannot come from a man who is not saved, and it cannot come from one who is not in fellowship—has no peace—and therefore before he comes there he had better see if everything is settled between God and him.

You see by the “but” with which this begins that it is connected with what we have gone over in a former chapter. There it was, as we found, thorough unworldliness, and therefore I can go into the world to obey any exaction of the government, stoop to any position to help others, pay whatever honor is called for, because I do not belong there. One is vastly more able to do anything for man by not be-

ing of the world than if he were in it. In Luke x. you have the story of the good Samaritan. Now the priest and Levite belonged to the system to which that man belonged, and they did nothing for him ; but another who came down from above (for it is really Christ in figure), one that was hated—a Samaritan, having provision with him for wounds, picks him up and puts him on his own beast. In this chapter we come to another place where we are simply called upon to strip ourselves of self. If I have liberty to do this or that under the law of the new man, which I could not do under the old law, must I use my liberty as a means of detriment to a brother ? Take him for the Lord's sake for what he is. The fact of the matter is in regard to these things, such as we find in 1 Cor. viii., where the question came up of meat offered to idols, and how to treat a brother who could not eat it. The great thing there was that you were to show out grace. You remember in the case of the man that was blind in John ix., the question was, "Has somebody sinned that he was made blind ?" No, it was because God should be manifest. And so in John xi. with Lazarus who was sick and then died. His death was to bring out a richer thing—the glory of God. Now, then, this weak brother who knows less than you do, and cannot quite keep up in the line of truth or action, does not apprehend his liberty in Christ, is in a certain way under restrictions ; what is he there for ? To be repulsed all the time ? No, to be received. To call out grace in you. He is needful for you that you may show out the abundant grace that God has shown to you. That is what this chapter tells us. Here are people that esteem the first day of the week the Sabbath, which it is not; that they are under the ten commandments, which they are not. Am I to insist

that they give up? No, I am to yield. A brother I know could not ride in a street car on Sunday. The word of God will tell him better by and by. The brother, however, that was with him walked five miles and back to church rather than offend him by making him ride in the cars with him who did not feel as he did about it. It will not do for me to assume that I have more piety or more knowledge or more of anything than my brethren.

Ver. 6. He that regards it regards it unto the Lord. He does it with a conscience. He may regard it to the Lord and be misinformed. There was a time when Paul was keeping every Jewish exaction, and they all went off when God showed him his sin. I could not observe Christmas or Sabbaths or Easter if I were going to be hung for not doing it. But am I going to apply that to everyone? No, I could not do that. What are all the other days? They are all the Lord's and all the same except that the first day of the week is set apart to gather together in the Lord's name to partake of His body in remembrance of Him.

We are not to receive one another on the ground of intelligence. Intelligence in regard to the truth will make me more capable of acting in the truth, but the grand thing is that I have a heart for His things, and every assembly will receive a man that was just born of God yesterday, and the only thing that he knows probably is that he is saved. All the information that we take years to get he knows nothing about; are we to say, Step back until you gain intelligence? And suppose from the fact that he knows so little he acts feebly, does that make any difference? No, give him a hand and help him along, and if coming out of Judaism there are Judaistic trapplings about him, so be it; yield to him and do not try to lead his conscience away from what it bids him.

Ver. 9. Here we are all one and are directly to be joined together, and He is the Lord of both, and so He says, "Why do you judge your brother?" There is One who will judge. We are to help each other; as to the judgment that will be attended to directly. Suppose my brethren judge me and find me all right; am I necessarily all right before God? What is the use of their judging me at all then?

Ver. 13. Let us not therefore judge one another any more. The kingdom of God does not consist of meat and drink, and things are no longer unclean as they were under the Jewish ritual. I know therefore that there is nothing unclean. But to him that esteems it unclean it is unclean. It is the same thought brought out more fully.

If a man compel thee to go with him a mile, go twain. Suppose I scold him all the way; I had better go with him first, and then after I have shown him the cross maybe I will have power to show him that God acts in grace and that he should also. Never yield to what is wrong, of course, that is not what it means here. I can yield everything of mine but nothing of God's. All that belongs to me may go.

Ver. 15. Suppose you say, "O, I have faith that lifts me above all that ritual." Well, suppose you have; have it with God; have it at home; but do not have it with him to whom it is an offence and a stone of stumbling. Do not exploit it here and make it a means of hurting others. It does seem that the man who passes through these chapters from the twelfth on, and comes out in accordance with what these chapters say, is a wonderful man. It is all doctrine until the end of the eleventh, then all is practical living. Let not then your good be evil spoken of. My very faith may become a shame if I use it

wrongly. I have heard a good deal about serving God and glorifying man. Well, here is your path. People have gone out to meeting and given experiences when they have been cross and unbearable at home. But He comes into the home and heart and says, "Let us have it here." He that in these things serves Christ is acceptable to God. "So let us follow after the things that make peace." Just for the sake of carrying out your views do not break down but build up. It is a wonderful chapter. May the Lord make it clear to us.

CHAPTER XV.

What does it mean by those that are strong? The chapter preceding began with "Him that is weak in the faith;" that may be bound down by the law or something that had to do with Judaism incapable of apprehending his liberty in Christ. This is the one He called weak. Then he went on to speak of another that did not know his liberty, hence we that are strong would mean those that know their places in Christ, their deliverance from this bondage to the law, and have found everything in Him. What am I there for, or left down here for, if I have learned my liberty? Why to show out grace toward the one that is not there. We are to bear the infirmities of the weak. If I know so much I know it of Him who is the very expression of God's grace. I know Him who is love, and therefore I am the more to act out and bear all these weaknesses of others. And then not to please ourselves; just as it was in 1 Cor. ix., and as the preceding chapter gives it. To clinch it he says, "Even Christ pleased not Himself." In John xviii., when they came to arrest Him, He says, "For ye seek me, let these go their way." They said to Him, "He saved others, Himself He cannot save." He took the place of others. This then is our example, not to please ourselves, just as Christ never pleased Himself in anything. Giving this quotation then from Ps. lxix., He lets us know a very important principle from the Old Testament, and now He gives the secret of all those quotations we have in this book. "Whatsoever were written aforetime were written for our learning." There is not a portion then of the word of God in the Old Testament that is not a lesson for us.

Meanwhile as He kept a remnant in Israel, He

will also keep a remnant in the church. All these things you see are typical. Also the same principles of grace and righteousness as in chapter iii., "Now the righteousness of God is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets." This means the Old Testament. These same principles were there. In chapter iv. the principle of righteousness without works was found in Gen. xv., Ps. xxxii., and elsewhere.

A word in regard to 1 Cor. x. 11—"types." People have said, "Were they types for them?" No, types for us. The Israelite did not understand that the lamb he sacrificed typified a Christ away down yonder in the coming ages. But it is a type for us. Now if I who have learned of Christ as having been crucified and raised up take a lamb as a sacrifice for my sins I am an apostate. If I go back to Judaism and take the law as my rule of life I have become an apostate. They could not be rid of the law. For an Israelite to have said he was not under the law was to turn Gentile and be an apostate. For us to take the law and turn Jew would be to become an apostate. They are types for *us*. The Israelites who sprinkled blood on the door posts did not know it was the blood of Christ, but we know it. Do not mix them then. Do not say we are all one. One is of earth and the other of heaven. One had it as a literal matter and the other as typical. Now I am enriched immensely by having Ex. xii., as it gives me a type of Christ as our Passover. Now you blot out Lev. i., and I do not know what the other means at all. But having that I have the whole detail given me. Then whatsoever was written aforetime was written for our learning. What then? I am here walking in type in the wilderness.

How much there is here about the hope. The hope

and the patient waiting go together. I do not have to wait for what I have, and so I take up the hope here whereas it is given a little further on.

Ver. 5. Just think that He is up there waiting for us as eagerly as we are waiting for Him. He lets all these things take place against His people, and everything getting worse everywhere ; He is patient in the midst of it all. Therefore His patience we are to share. Ps. ii. says, "I set my kingdom on the holy hill of Zion." He had to wait, you see. It is the wrong way to be patient to be occupied with friends and getting rich and gratifying my lusts. Patience is taking this as a wilderness, and being kept by the Holy Spirit ministering grace to me. The God of comfort and patience then is the One to whom we appeal. What difference does it make about this or that loss or that word said against us ; the Lord is coming. We will all be up there. What if I have to give up a hundred things here for His sake ? Keep that before me and nothing else amounts to anything. What immense arguments He is bringing to bear for very little things. That is being strong to have all that before me. "With one mouth," etc. You see if we are giving up all the time we can with one mouth glorify God, but if I am going to hold on to others, there will be as many mouths as there are people. Testimony is living and not talk. If you were dumb all the rest of the time till the Lord comes what a sweet testimony there would be going all through New York and its neighborhoods. Let us take it up and act in it. Be all of one mind and one mouth, glorifying thus the Lord and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Just as Israel was called out to the name of Jehovah and the Gentile to the name of God, we have Lord and Father of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Ver. 7. Where receive one another as Christ received you. I wonder how He received you and me. What were we when He took us? The third and fifth chapters of this book will tell us. God commendeth His love toward us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for the ungodly. Ungodly sinners, without strength, and how did He receive you? The shepherd went out and picked up the sheep and carried it all the rest of the way. He did not believe in letting him down to go along on foot. Because of our helplessness He is help. Christ received me in my weakness; let me receive my brother. This is to the glory of God the Father.

Ver. 8. This is the closing up now. It is giving us the sum total of what Christ was here for, and you may say of what you have had in Romans. Chapter xi. tells us that the casting away of the Jew became our gain. First to the Jews who came and then to the Gentiles. And quoting again, "Therefore will I give rise unto thee among the Gentiles and the sinners." "Praise Jehovah all ye Gentiles, and let all the people praise Him." The Gentiles looked at first as those that the little remnant of Israel are among, then among them, and then separately.

"That ye may abound in the hope." If I am not perfectly clear that I am saved I cannot have much joy in the hope. When people get to see that they are saved they want Christ to come. That is what it means here. The hope before me He tells me of Christ's work in which I am rejoicing and having perfect peace.

THE END.

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